TWO SPLENDID SERIAL STORIES BECIN NEXT WEEK, "OLD SATAN'S CAL" AND "THE MASSINGBIRD PUZZLE." THEY WILL CURE THE SPRING FEVER

THE CHICAGO LEDGER

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Heralds of the Spring

More surely now than bees or birds awing,
Or lovelorn youths in search of blushing mates,
Come the long waited heralds of the spring,
The glad kids trying out their roller skates.

The Master of the Mills;

Or, Mildred Starbard's Peril

By L. A. Jocelyn Smith

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CHAPTER XIII.

THE MILLS OF THE GODS.

THE time allotted for the doctor's stay at Haselden had nearly expired, and each day he became more convinced that his host had some guilty secret, and that it concerned the missing girl was the most probable.

Upon the morning previous to the day set for the doctor's return home he arose early, and as he stepped into the hall he heard a loud call from Littlefield's room. Upon entering he was surprised to find his host tossing his arms wildly and muttering in a nightmare.

"You'll never find her! It is a secure hiding place! Allan Bruce, how I hate you! I didn't kill her, I tell you."

"He was only acting, a fine piece of diplomacy on his part, and it is quite certain that the girl's lover believed him. I must get speech with Bruce, and learn more of the particulars which Horace is not inclined to talk of. He is morose, unsocial, almost rude, and I suspect he'll be glad when I leave Haselden. I do not believe that he has murdered her, but I feel assured that he knows what has become of her, and I'm certain that he hates Bruce. He was actually ghastly pale when I spoke of his talking in his sleep, and questioned me closely. 'Oh, ho! they may search but they'll never find her! Curse him, how I hate him, but they'll never know!' That's what he muttered. He's afraid of his own shadow. I wouldn't have his conscience for a kingdom."

Twice the doctor had made an evening call at Mrs. Starbard's house, but found that Bruce was busily engaged in making up books, at the office, and would not be at home until midnight.

Pleading business, Horace left the house directly after breakfast, and went away to the mill, leaving his friend to his own devices. His face was pale except for a fever spot that burned upon his sallow cheeks, the flame kindled by an evil conscience.

He rarely visited that upper story where another occupied the seat at the labeler's board, a girl less fair than Mildred.

Sauntering about in a listless, preoccupied fashion, from one winding machine to another, he reached the rear of the long workroom, pausing beside the main shaft where the great belt was revolving with the swiftness of lightning.

Those nearest him saw him suddenly stare, such a ghastly horror-stricken face that Sophia Blake gave a little scream of affright, rousing the long line of girls down the aisle, and in an instant all eyes were turned in the direction of the door, gazing blankly at the pale, slender girl standing upon the threshold, her great dark eyes fixed full upon the shrinking face of the master of Haselden.

A hoarse cry rose above even the din of the revolving wheels, an awful cry of unutterable horror, as Horace Littlefield, with hands outstretched, as if to ward off the phantom, reeled blindly backward.

His livid face was turned toward the figure standing in the doorway, the form of the girl he believed dead, lying in the lonely cell directly beneath his feet.

Not one had noticed Allan Bruce standing just outside the door, until with a stride he placed himself beside the black-robed girl whom all remembered as their late companion, while looming in the background stood two officers.

The foreman stared blankly, with open-mouthed astonishment, the girl shrank back as the officers made their way across the room in obedience to Bruce's stern command:

"Arrest that man! I charge him with the attempted murder of Mildred Starbard, whom he believed dead by his hand, and whom he left buried alive in the old wheel-pit beneath the mill! Officers, do your duty!"

The accusation rang out above the crash and whir of the revolving wheels, and mechanically the startled operatives cast off the whirling belts, forgetting to even cry out, so intense was their astonishment.

"Mildred—alive!" gasped Horace, fiercely, setting his teeth and rousing himself to meet the appalling situation. "She has escaped, is here to accuse me, to send me to prison, but I will meet the ordeal bravely!"

All his savage blood was up in an instant.

"Back! back!" he shouted, hoarsely, "how dare you come here, minions, with such a tale? The man is mad! Yonder woman is an escaped lunatic!"

"Which we will give you opportunity to prove before judge and jury!" called Bruce, as he advanced to confront the villain, who drew a revolver and stood at bay.

"You lie!" he shrieked. "I'll shoot the first man who dares advance to lay a finger on me!"

Unmindful of the desperate threat, both officers sprang forward. There was a flash, a report, and the arm of the foremost fell by his side, shattered at the wrist.

Shriek upon shriek rent the air as the frightened women crowded back, while Allan Bruce rushed to the assistance of the remaining officer.

"Don't allow him to escape; he's a desperate villain!" called Allan, as he grasped Littlefield's wrist, and with a powerful wrench twisted the weapon from his hand, tossing it to a distance.

"Let go, you cursed hireling. I'll not be taken alive!" yelled Littlefield, as he broke from his captor, seized a ponderous hammer from a shelf near at hand and swung it with a tremendous sweep about his head, as he retreated backward.

Again the wild shrieks of women mingled with the warning cry of men.

Too late—Horace Littlefield rushed blindly to his fate.

The flying belt caught the skirt of his coat, and with lightning-like velocity he was whirled upward; once, twice, thrice, he made the dreadful circuit, his limbs dashed helplessly against the heavy beams above.

A single, despairing cry burst from his lips, but at the first contact with the heavy obstruction he was struck as senseless as if already dead.

With the lithe bound of a gazelle, Mildred sprang forward, seized the ponderous lever, and with a strength born of horror and fear, forced it downward.

Instantly the huge belt slipped upon the loose pulley, and the released, mangled form fell heavily to the floor, an inert heap.

With the power withdrawn, the steady thud of the machinery ceased, and there was an uproar in the entrance hall, as down the slippery stairs the employes from the upper rooms flocked.

Allan lifted the head of the prostrate man, resting it upon his knee, while the horrified spectators crowded closely around to get a glimpse of the death-white, blood-stained face of their late employer.

"Is he dead?"

The awesome whisper rose on all sides, but none could answer.

"Call a doctor—the nearest—Doctor Scott, he is the family physician," commanded Bruce, and the foreman was hastening to obey when he ran blindly against a man who was crossing the room, a servant from Haselden, and wearing a very white, scared face.

"What's the matter? Who is hurt here?" he panted, quite out of breath. "What is it about; Doctor Scott? You can't get him, he's over at Haselden where I've just sent him. Old Peter is very sick. Mrs. Granger sent me for the doctor, and to fetch Mr. Littlefield. He's needed badly. Great God! it's Mr. Horace himself! Oh, Lord!"

He broke off abruptly as his glance rested upon the prostrate form which Allan Bruce was just lowering to the mass of shawls and wraps which the terrified girls brought.

"Dead! How did it happen?" whispered the frightened servant. "This is awful!"

It was indeed a gruesome sight, the arms of the young man hung heavily, the lower limbs drooped in a strangely unnatural posture, but the head moved slightly, and the lips compressed in a white line beneath the black mustache.

"He is not dead; it would be better for him if he were, poor fellow," Allan answered in a hushed voice, the crimes of the man, in his pity forgetting for the mass of crushed humanity.

"Here's the doctor!" called a voice, and through the crowd, who hovered about the fallen man, Doctor Dunbar made his way, (illegible) closed eyes, but breathing faintly.

A low moan burst from his lips as the physician began the necessary examination.

The doctor, professionally, a man of few words, summed up the case in the briefest manner:

"Both arms are broken, legs broken, the right in two places; shoulders badly bruised, and severe injury to the head; the skull probably fractured; loss of blood not very severe. Call an ambulance and I will take him on board the train, which leaves for Springfield in ten minutes," glancing at his watch.

"I can do but little here for him; case for the hospital. Fortunate for him that he is partially unconscious."

The crowd fell back, while willing hands bore the wounded man to the ambulance, which was driven slowly away, accompanied by the doctor and two employes.

By order of the foreman the mill was closed for the day, and the girls gathered about Mildred, whom they regarded almost in the light of one raised from the dead, a confused clamor of questions rising on all sides.

"And you were hidden right under our very feet?"

"What a horrible wretch! It is true, after all, and he was guilty?"

"He deserves worse than hanging!"

"And he's got it!"

"It's a righteous judgment, sent on him for his wickedness!"

Amid a Babel of cries and interrogations, Mildred was enthroned upon an office chair, while she related the particulars of her imprisonment and miraculous escape.

CHAPTER XIV.

HORACE.

The obloquy attached to his attack upon the young girl who had so mysteriously returned, after her escape from the pit beneath the mill, could not be avoided, but even to the most uncharitable and bitter the grave "buries every error, covers every defect," and remembering that even should Horace live he must arise from that couch of pain a maimed and crippled object of pity, Mildred forgave him, and the prosecution was withdrawn.

He had not meant to murder her, she knew that, but she shuddered at the thought of what her fate might have been but for the interposition of a merciful Providence.

Of her wanderings after her escape from the building she had not the faintest recollection. When she awoke from the delirium into which she had fallen, she was lying in a strange, gruesome cell, stone walls about her, an arched ceiling of stone above her head.

She could see by the faint daylight that struggled through a narrow crevice within reach of her hand, that the place was furnished with meager scantiness, a chair, a stand, upon which half a dozen vials were ranged, a goblet, a small lamp—that was all, save the narrow cot on which she lay.

In a hazy sort of way she comprehended these details. A profound silence reigned, broken only by the soft sighing of the wind, and the rustling of leaves upon the thick branches of shrubbery which overlapped a narrow door at the extremity of the cell.

She raised her hand feebly to her forehead. What was this? A bandage of some soft material encircled her head, and once more memory made almost superhuman effort to recall the past, but all in vain, and again closing her eyes she lay in a half stupor, her mind a chaos.

When next she fully awoke a lamp was burning upon the little stand by the side of her cot, and the rickety chair was occupied.

Where had she seen that face before, an old man, bent and wrinkled. Something in the face brought back a realization of the terrible scenes through which she had passed, as like a knife-thrust sense and memory resumed its sway, she remembered that fatal evening, the scene beneath the gaslight in the mill, the struggle, the darkness that clouded her senses for a season, then the terrible awakening in what she believed a living tomb; the steady sawing of sharp teeth which had opened her way to freedom, then again all was a blank.

"Who are you?"

Her voice, even to herself, seemed faint and afar off.

The old man rose slowly from his chair and bent over her, taking her white hand in his brown palms and gazing down into her face as if he would ascertain if the light of reason had returned.

"Thank God, Miss Milly, you are saved! Don't you know me, child? I'm old Peter—Peter Harkins, you know, head gardener at Haselden; leastaways I was before I got so old; no, child, don't try to tell me; the old man knows well enough what has happened; you've told it over and over when you was as mad as a March hare, all about the rats, everything.

"I found you wandering in the woods near here, but how you got there without being found, I don't know, but here I found you at daybreak. You were a-lying on the ground raving, out o' your head, and I knew that Littlefield, for some wicked reason of his own, had put you in the wheel-pit and left you to die there. He is wicked and cruel—nobody knows that better than old Peter, and I made up my mind that if he knows that you were living he would finish the work and nobody be the wiser. Then I thought o' this place, nobody ever comes here, you know, and I took you in my arms as if you were a baby and brought you here; nobody minds old Peter; there's a younger man in my place at Haselden, and so I had plenty of time to nurse you back to life, but many's the day I thought this spot would be your grave, for I'd have buried you here, child.

"I thought it all out. If you died I would go to Mr. Bruce and tell my story; if you lived, you'd tell him yourself, but you see, while you were out of your mind, I could do nothing."

"And Allan, he thinks me dead?"

"Everybody thinks that, Miss Milly; everybody, and they have searched high and low, but never dreamed of looking here."

"How long have I been here, and what place is this?" she asked, gazing curiously about at the grim, gray walls, the black door, standing now partly closed, and noticing that the cell was windowless. "What place is this? It is all so strange!"

"You might feel kind o' dubious if I tell you," hesitated Peter. "Think you would?"

"No."

"Well, then, child, it's the safest place in the world; the old smoke house belongs to the Haseldens, but, bless you, it hasn't been used for fifty years as I know on; it's right in the middle of the big grove, and now the underbrush and briars have grown right up to the door, and there's a tree growing on the top, right over our heads, and the roots have made a big crease between the stones in the arch, until three or four have caved in and let in daylight, so I can have the door closed mostly," explained old Peter, with the utmost sang froid. "I hope you won't feel nervous, little girl."

"I have not the least fear, Uncle Peter," Mildred replied, "but," as she tried to raise herself upon her arm, "Allan must be told, and I must go to him; he will know exactly what to do. Wealthy and powerful though Horace Littlefield is, he shall pay the penalty of his crime."

"Just as soon as you are able to be taken away from here I will go and tell Mr. Bruce. He is at the mill."

"At the mill? Why, there was a strike, how came he there?" asked Mildred, wonderingly.

"A strike, so there was, and when you were missed the mob came over to Haselden and were a-going to burn the house over his head. They believed there had been foul play, and that Mr. Horace had made 'way with you, but somehow, by the help of a man who came on from New York, he put 'em off the track, made 'em all believe he was innocent; then he agreed to their terms and set 'em all to work again at the old wages," explained Peter, "and now you shall go to sleep again, while I get forty winks in my chair, and tomorrow, if you are strong enough, I will go over to Riverdale and your sweetheart shall come back with me."

Calmed by his promise, Mildred drifted into a quiet, healthful slumber, which lasted many hours.

But it was nearly a week before Peter Harkins was enabled to fulfil his promise, and Mildred regained her strength sufficiently to be removed from her refuge.

It was with the utmost caution, and after exacting a promise of secrecy concerning his share in the affair, that old Peter imparted the joyful news to Allan, who listened, at first with incredulity, fully believing that the old gardener was demented, and that his strange story was but the hal-

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hallucination engendered by the startling events to which Peter had listened, but at last he was convinced of the truth of the story, and his fine eyes lit up with a joyous gleam, his heart throbbed tumultously.

"I will go to her at once!" he exclaimed. "Remain here while I bring a carriage. I will drive you over, and you shall lead me to the old smoke house. My darling will find a safe refuge with her mother until the proper time to expose the villain and secure his arrest, for, by Heaven, he shall not go unpunished!"

We draw a veil over the scene when the happy, grateful Mildred was clasped in her lover's arms, both forgetful of the gruesome surroundings, while old Peter stood by, rubbing his hands gleefully, and chuckling softly:

"God bless 'em both! It does my old heart good to think that the Lord has made me an instrument to bring these two together, makes me feel 'most young again!"

Wrapping the heavy cloak he had brought about her slight form, and drawing the hood over her face, Allan handed Mildred to the carriage which was waiting in the grass-grown cross-road, and drove rapidly away to the tenement house upon one of the quiet, suburban streets of Riverdale, where Mrs. Starbard awaited the coming of her daughter, while old Peter hobbled back to Haselden awaiting coming events.

CHAPTER XV.

DETECTIVE BY CHANCE.

In a private apartment, at the hospital, Horace Littlefield lay, at times unconscious, or raving by turns, while James Dunbar sat beside his cot, noting every change, a self-constituted nurse for the man who had been his friend.

He watched, anxiously, while a corps of physicians performed all the operations that could be borne by the patient, but there was not a hope that life could be prolonged beyond a few hours.

In the hall, adjoining, a trained nurse awaited a call from the young physician, while the hours wore on, the dull ticking of a watch lying upon the table told the seconds like a weird death-watch.

Occasionally a smothered cry, or a deep groan came from the distance, as some ward patient called for aid, but the ear of the dying man was deaf to all sounds.

It was long past midnight, and the experienced physician knew that his patient would never see the light of dawn.

"Oh, if he would only recover his reason for a brief moment," prayed the watcher, "he might, in the face of death, make a confession that would clear the mystery his ravings have hinted at. God grant that he may!"

An alarm of fire broke the stillness, seven discordant drones that could be felt like the pealing of an organ, and as the vibration reached his nerves, the dying man opened his eyes and stared wildly, his gaze fixed upon a shadowy corner of the room.

"Uncle Cliff, are you there? Have you come from the world of spirits to tear the truth from my lips? Would you unearth the secret I have guarded, force me to acknowledge Allan Bruce as your son, and make him master of Haselden?"

The foam gathered upon the wretched sufferer's lips, he clenched his hands, raised them feebly, but they fell nervelessly upon the counterpane.

"You saw me, you have haunted my dreams, made my days a torture since the moment I took Letitia's confession from your hand—I feel the touch of your clammy fingers—I have felt them ever since. I hid the paper where no one could find it. Yes, yes! I'd have destroyed it, but your dead eyes followed me, and I dared not burn the proof. I placed it where you kept the mementoes of your dead wife—Emeline, and you smiled when I folded the pages closely and concealed the proof in——"

The sufferer gasped for breath, and his eyes half closed.

Dunbar bent over him, holding his breath to catch a sound. He must know the hiding place, there was not a moment to lose, and, placing his lips to the ear of the dying man, he whispered:

"Where did you hide the paper you stole from my hand? Confess, I command you!"

"You saw me, you know I placed it in the frame beneath her portrait! Have mercy!"

"Whose portrait?" demanded Dunbar, in a metallic whisper.

"Emeline's—you saw me, you opened your dead eyes and followed every motion, while I unsealed the framework and placed the confession beneath the back. Your body was lying upon the bier in your own chamber, your spirit was beside me, just as it is now—you are beckoning me—I must go, and Emeline's son will be master of Haselden! I'll confess, I'll confess!"

He raised his hands with a convulsive movement, struggled an instant, and all was over.

"Praise the Lord! I can unravel the mystery at last. Little did he imagine that by giving me his uncle's room I should be enabled to search for the proof of his guilt, after the soul that inhabited this tenement of clay should have passed to its account. God be merciful to him!" breathed the physician, with a half sob in his throat.

Upon the early morning train Horace Littlefield's body was borne on its way to Haselden.

Few tears were shed, for the servants at the mansion had no pleasant memories of the master who had been overbearing and cold, but the funeral was conducted with decorum and a show of respect when Horace Littlefield was laid to his last sleep beside his kindred.

Doctor Dunbar retired at an early hour, for he was in a state of nervous excitement that was almost unbearable. He must probe the mystery, and his fingers trembled when he lifted the cumbrous frame from its fastenings and drew the studding of tacks from the frame, releasing the back. His heart beat with heavy thuds when two papers slipped to the rug beneath his feet.

With nervous haste he unfolded the closely written pages, drew his chair beneath the gas jet, while he read the lines penned by a hand cold in death, dumb witness in the chain of circumstantial evidence he had forged, thus far, link by link, concerning the mystery that had so long shrouded the flight of Emeline.

"SAG HARBOR, L. I., May 2, 18——.

"Dear Clifford—Permit me to call you so for the last time, for when you have finished

A single cry burst from his lips.

the reading of these pages you will curse the writer. I am about to unfold the plot that sent your young wife into the cold world penniless and friendless, made your home desolate and embittered your life with an unavailing sorrow, but I cannot, dare not die until I have unburdened my heart and besought your forgiveness.

"Many years ago, when you were but a youth of fifteen, you, with your parents and your baby sister, Lura, were among the passengers on the ill-fated steamer, 'Lexington,' that was burned to the water's edge, on Long Island Sound. You remember the horrors of that bitter winter night, when passengers and crew leaped from the fire-billows, most of them to meet death in the ice-laden waters.

"I was but a child of seven, living with my widowed mother, in a cottage upon the Long Island shore, and from our window we viewed the terrific sight, powerless to give aid.

"Higher and fiercer rose the red flames, in banners that dyed the dark waters, turned the icy masses to sparkling gems, and painted the blue coldness of the star-gemmed, winter sky.

"Huge ice cakes crashed together, rendering the passage of boats extremely difficult and dangerous.

"The steward and one of the crew, escaped in a small boat, and just as they were pulling away from the burning steamer a piercing cry rose above the awful din.

" 'Save my baby! I must die, but, for the love of God, save her!'

"A lady, whose face was plainly revealed in the glare of the conflagration, raised her arm and cast a bundle out upon the water. It fell within arm's length from the boat, a baby girl wrapped in a fur mantle, which was securely bound about its body. The fur was scarcely wet, so short was the interval before it was grasped by the steward.

"Passengers were dropping or leaping into the waves, shrieking for aid, and it required the utmost skill of the oarsmen to avoid the clutch of drowning men and women that must have swamped the cockleshell boat.

"Rowing with might and main, the sailors reached the shore and hurried to our cottage, which was nearest their landing place.

"My mother took the child in her arms, and the two men went away, hoping to aid in the rescue of other unfortunates. Numbers of the crew gave their lives in the heroic attempt to save drowning wretches, but most of the passengers were lost.

"At the last moment, when all hope was vain, Captain Hilliard lashed himself to a cotton bale, and drifted at the will of the tide. It was not until the morning that he was washed ashore, and his limbs were so badly frozen that amputation was necessary.

"We watched, fascinated with the very horror of the scene, until the sheets of flame melted in one huge blot of crimson, swayed from side to side, sank lower and lower, spread for a brief moment upon the icy bosom of the waters, fluttered like a lurid winding-sheet, and, with a flash, sunk from sight where the ill-fated Lexington went down.

"You were among the very last of the passengers that were crowded in a boat, to which you were taken unconscious. The captain reported that your father and mother refused to enter the boat until you and your little sister were lowered safely. There was no room for the babe, and the boatmen pulled shoreward. Scarcely were you placed in the boat when a curtain of fire swept upward, parents and child were hidden from view. They perished, while, all unconscious of their fate, you were brought safely to shore and carried to Daddy Coleman's shanty, a cabin, constructed from odd bits picked up from wreckage, portions of staterooms patched together. The old fisherman was as queer as his dwelling. He was fond of children, and I was his favorite, and thus it happened that I was a frequent visitor at the cabin.

"A fever followed your terrible exposure, and I sat by your cot while you tossed restlessly, babbling of your little sister, your father and mother, whom we knew were sleeping beneath the waters of the Sound.

"Daddy Coleman cautioned me not to disturb the little ivory box he had taken from your pocket and placed upon a shelf at the head of your couch. The caution stimulated my curiosity, and, during his absence I took a peep at the contents, two tiny bracelets of pink Neapolitan coral. Upon the golden clasp was engraved a name, so often upon your lips:

" 'Lura.'

"I was inordinately fond of trinkets, and these ornaments proved too much for my childish honesty. I purloined one of the bracelets, closed the box and placed it on the shelf. I had learned from your murmurings that Lura was your sister, and I hid my treasure where I was certain my mother would not find it, reasoning that when you recovered, you would go far away, and I could pretend that I had picked up the bauble on the beach. You recovered, and, contrary to my expectation, you missed the bracelet, but no suspicion that I had purloined it entered the honest fisherman's mind.

"Upon what trivial acts our destinies hang. I was too young to realize that I had committed a crime, it was only the punishment that I feared, and little did I dream that in taking the ornament I coveted I laid the foundation for a sin that would blast the life of the little waif thrown on our care, and render your life miserable.

"In a few months we removed to New Haven, taking the child, whom my mother had named Emeline. My mother forbade me to speak of that night of horror, or to hint that the little waif was not her own flesh and blood, and Emeline was reared in the belief that she was my sister."

(Continued next week.)

Well! Well!

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Mrs. Town—Why, I should say. She hires a divorce lawyer by the year.

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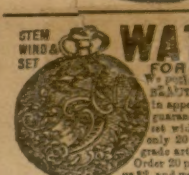

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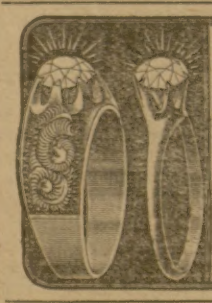

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WICHITA, Kas.—The almost miraculous cures of hopeless invalids made by Professor Samuels of Wichita, Kas., have been of such a startling character that they have aroused widespread wonder, admiration and curiosity. Time and again he has taken cases pronounced hopelessly incurable by the medical profession and restored the patients to life and health in a most phenomenal manner.

There is considerable mystery attached to Professor Samuels' methods of accomplishing these marvels, and it is known that he does not use the drastic drugs and medicines that doctors depend upon. He claims to have discovered in his forty years of practice, that a certain law of nature has peculiar properties heretofore unsuspected, and that by the application of this law, there is no disease he may not cure. And it is a matter of proof that with the mysterious system this discovery gives him, he has made the blind see and the lame walk. He has revived the flickering spark of life in bodies on the very verge of the grave, and restored to health men and women given up to die by doctors and specialists.

Professor Samuels came into note several years ago by his almost miraculous cure of "Blind Joe," of [illegible] popcorn on the streets there for years. He had been blind for ten years and had exhausted all the means in his power to be cured, but had given up in despair until he fell into the hands of Professor Samuels, who effected a cure.

Professor Samuels has been arrested many times for practicing his system without having a diploma. On being interviewed a few days ago relative to his many arrests, Prof. Samuels said:

"Yes, I have been arrested many times for practicing without a license, but in no case have I been convicted. Naturally, the medical profession are jealous of my success and are fighting me most of the time, but how are they going to convict me? Do you suppose any jury, when my patients come into court as they did at Alva, Ok.; Newkirk, Ok.; Ponca City, Ok., and other towns, and tell how I have cured them of all manner of troubles, do you suppose for a minute that any jury hearing these people and seeing with their own eyes what I have accomplished, is going to convict me? My trial at Alva was before a very able judge, Jesse J. Dunn, who is now Chief Justice of the state of Oklahoma; after hearing the evidence for and against me, I was acquitted. At Newkirk I was tried before Judge Hausley, a very able judge. Judge Brown, a noted lawyer, was the prosecuting attorney, and fought the case very hard, but I was acquitted. These persecutions were brought because I have no license. Being the discoverer and only practitioner of my system of healing, how am I to have a diploma? I can't issue it to myself, and the medical fraternity, trotting along in the same harness for half a century, too blind to accept my discovery, which accomplishes actual results, make it impossible for me to procure a license as a representative of any of the recognized schools. So what am I to do but to proceed in my own way to perform cures that astound humanity?"

The professor here laid before the reporter a reprint from the court records showing the proof of his assertions that the court had not convicted him.

Professor Samuels is a remarkable man. Bright, alert, progressive and although 60, he is straight and active and gives one the impression that he is much younger. He talks with such an earnest conviction and enthusiasm of his work that the listener must believe him and believe in his work.

"What is the nature of your treatment?" was the next question.

"That is a secret that has taken me many years of my life to perfect. I can only say that my results are obtained treating all diseases through the eye. I cure by dropping a colorless liquid which I prepare into the eye. Strange as it may seem, so-called incurable cases of consumption, Bright's disease, dropsy, epileptic fits, nervous prostration are cured in this apparently miraculous way. My system is based absolutely on scientific principles. The eye is the window of the soul. I have evolved a system of treating other bodily ills, based on the relation of the eye to the system as a whole. This may seem strange, but I back up my claims by results."

Thereupon the professor placed before the reporter his "Message of Facts," affidavits and letters in great numbers, many of them from responsible and well-known people, all bearing on his statements.

This proved that Mrs. P. O. Wilson, living at 212 Pine street, Wichita, Kas., had doctored for years for Consumption. Her mother and sister had both died of this dreaded disease. She says: "I had about given up all hope, expecting that I would eventually die and leave my family to the care of others." At this critical stage she began to take Professor Samuels' treatment which resulted in a perfect cure. It has been six years since this cure was made and none of the symptoms have ever returned. This can be verified by writing or calling upon Mr. Wilson.

Another noted case of Consumption was that of Mr. Frank Hoff, now in business at [illegible] Kas., who [illegible] up to die of Consumption. [illegible] been treated by the greatest specialist in Brooklyn, N. Y. It was some seven years ago when he had tried everything else without avail, that he came to Professor Samuels and was cured. He is a large, strong man and weighs 240 pounds now, and when called upon stated that he owed his life to Professor Samuels.

Mary A. Stout who lives at Burlington, Kas., had what was pronounced to be a bad case of Diabetes. This disease is pronounced incurable by regular practitioners. This case was treated and cured by Professor Samuels. In a recent letter to Professor Samuels, she writes: "I feel well, and have no marks of Diabetes. May God's richest blessing ever be with you."

Mrs. J. T. Derrick, living at Wakita, Grant County, Ok., who was cured of a bad case of Stomach trouble writes: "I was so bad with my stomach trouble when I began your treatment that I would think every night that I would die, and now I can say I feel that I am entirely cured. I had not taken your treatment a week until I could work and eat anything I wanted, where as before I could not eat anything (not even rice that would digest). I am a farmer and have been doing my farm work ever since I began your treatment, and I cannot praise it too highly."

The young son of W. W. Lyon, located at Augusta, Kas., had been suffering for a long time with a severe case of Asthma. He was treated by Professor Samuels and is entirely cured. In a recent letter, Mr. Lyons writes: "It was the best investment I ever made."

Mr. Frank Braden, a well known citizen of Ponca City, Ok., and who is county commissioner at that place, was suffering from what was known as paralysis of the Optic Nerve—a disease considered incurable by medical authority—and in addition to this affection was very ill and had been unable to do any labor for three years. He was cured by Professor Samuels and is now in perfect health.

Mr. Vere V. Hunt, L. L. D., a well known physician and surgeon living at Kildare, Ok., and who was formerly Division Surgeon for the Frisco railway, in a recent letter to Professor Samuels writes: "I find your miraculous remedy already helping my nerves. Who will deny that in not many years to come, you shall be regarded as the pioneer of a new and better system of therapeutics, in which the eye rather than the mouth shall be regarded as the proper entrance to the internal economy of suffering humanity? When that day arrives, those who now cast stones at you, will replace those stones with garlands. You will, I hope, then remember that one of the first to see the depth and wisdom of your theory was yours very gratefully, Vere V. Hunt, M. D."

"Is it necessary for your patients to come to see you to be treated?" was asked. "No, I have perfected my treatment so that I can treat by mail. Many of my patients come to see me, but it is not necessary. I send my treatment to hundreds, and, in fact, am as successful in treating that way as though the patients were right here. To people from a distance who write me, I send an information blank to fill out. In this way I am enabled to send them the treatment properly prepared with full directions for its use."

"I should think with your ability to cure, you would be in a position to demand big money from your patients," remarked the reporter. "No, I do not do that now. My charges when the patients called on me in person used to be pretty high. I am getting old, and I feel that it is my duty in my last years to place my discovery in the hands of the poor as well as the rich. I believe that I owe a duty to mankind and that as many people as possible should be benefited by my discovery. I want all humanity, no matter what race or nationality nor where located, to be benefited by my life's work. On this account, I have reduced my charges so they are within reach of the poorest. I am always glad to hear from anyone who is sick, no matter how poor they may be.

"My greatest aim in life from now on will be to relieve and cure the ills of humanity, and when death shall claim me, I have arranged so that my secret will not die with me, but will be known, so that men in all ages to come will reap the reward of my life's work."

Everyone who is sick, no matter what their trouble may be, should write Professor Samuels, room 62, Samuels Building, Wichita, Kas., for his "Message of Facts" and they will find something in it of interest to them.

CAPTAIN TOM'S PROMISE.

BY EMMA GARRISON JONES.

"Good-by, little mother!"

She came out into the morning sunshine at the sound of her son's voice, a little, shapely, girlish-faced woman in widow's weeds.

"Good-by, Tom, my good boy," standing on tiptoe to kiss him; "you'll not forget mother when you're gone?"

He looked down, and his keen, blue-gray eyes filled with tears, and the firm lips, beneath his tawny beard, trembled like a woman's.

"No, mother," a half sob in his voice, "I'll not forget you."

"I know you won't, my good, handsome Tom," she responded, patting and caressing his arm with her childish, dimpled hands. "You never caused your mother's heart an hour's sorrow in all your life, and you'll not begin now. I shall pray for you unceasingly, and you'll come back to me, Tom. I am sure the good God will bring you back to me. One word more, Tom [illegible] package from her bosom; "your father and I used to read it together. Mind, Tom, dear, and make it your guide and companion, and you'll never go astray. Army life is full of temptations, my boy, but for 'little mother's' sake you'll not yield to them?"

"No, mother."

"And, Tom, dear, you'll abstain from strong drink—you won't 'look on the wine when 'tis red?' You'll promise me that?"

"Yes, little mother."

"All right; you'll not break your promise, I'm sure of that. Whenever your companions press you to join them in a social glass, think of 'little mother,' Tom. It would break my heart to see my boy's handsome head brought low by strong drink."

"You shall never see it, mother. Good-by again—there goes the bugle—I must be off. Take care of yourself, little mother."

"Ay, ay, Tom!"

He slung his knapsack across his broad shoulders and strode down the dewy lane, the summer sunshine falling brightly on his burnished arms and soldier blue. In an hour's time he had joined his regiment, and was under marching orders for the seat of war.

A sultry summer night in Southern Virginia. The sky hot and brassy, a lurid, crescent moon hanging over the smoky fields and long lines of shimmering bayonets.

A group of officers were drinking and chatting in the colonel's tent.

"Come, Tom, my lad," said a gray-bearded old major, addressing the tall young captain of a cavalry company; "come, my lad, here's a glass of good old whisky to cool your blood and fire your courage. We've bloody work to do before the moon goes down."

He extended the brimming glass, and Tom put out his hand to receive it. He was out of sorts that sultry evening. His head throbbed with a dull pain, and a choking sensation at his throat almost stifled him. The pending engagement would be his first battle, and, despite his tall figure, sinewy limbs, and tawny beard, poor Tom's heart thrilled and throbbed with something that was almost fear.

He craved the clear, fiery liquor that sparkled so temptingly. It would make him strong for the terrible conflict in which he must soon take part. He took the brimming glass from the major's hand. The officers rose in a mass, clanking their sabers.

"Here goes!" cried the colonel, clinking his glass against that of his nearest neighbor; "we'll pledge our absent wives and sweethearts, boys!"

He drained his glass, and a dozen others followed his example; but tall Captain Tom put down his, still brimming and untasted. He had no wife or sweetheart in the far-off New England village where he was born, but he had his "little mother."

And in that moment of supreme temptation, her sweet, fair face seemed to rise between him and the fatal glass, and her voice spoke in his ear:

"No, Tom, don't, for 'little mother's' sake!"

He put down his glass untasted. Never in all his brave young life had he willfully disobeyed his "little mother;" never since the hour when his father died, and gave her to his keeping, had he caused her a moment's pain. He would not do so now. She would know—some subtle influence, flashing like electric fire from the Southern battleground to the old cottage amid the green New England hills, would warn her if he broke his promise and yielded to temptation.

"Why, what's up, cap'n?" cried the major. "Haven't turned teetotaler, have you, old boy? Come, down with your whisky!"

But Tom shook his head, and heedless of their jeers and laughter, turned away, leaving the sparkling glass untasted.

The desperate charge was over, and, like the heroes of Balaklava, only a few returned. Captain Tom was not among the number. He lay prostrate on the blood-stained battlefield, and the list of dead that was forwarded to New England bore his name.

In her desolate cottage, his "little mother" read it, with the account of the heroic onset, and mourned for her slain soldier as only a fond mother can.

Meanwhile, in a Southern hospital, scores of wounded sufferers lay, burned by consuming fevers that no skill could allay.

"Can't save them—not one," said the surgeon on his round. "The whole pack were drunk when they went into battle and this is the result. The whisky has fed the fever, you see! That fellow out there," pointing to the tall figure of Captain Tom, stretched upon a cot, "may recover—he was sober."

The summer was well over. Up amid the New England villages the grain was waving yellow on the hills, and in the orchards the fruit hung in luscious, golden clusters.

But hundreds of homes were made desolate by the loss of husbands, sons and brothers; hundreds of hearts ached with a sorrow that no earthly remedy could cure.

The "little mother" of tall Captain Tom sat on the low sill of the old-fashioned kitchen, in the shimmering light of the autumn moon.

Out under the tawny chestnut trees, where the brook was babbling, and the crickets chirping amid the yellow grasses, her husband lay in death's dreamless sleep, and the heart of the widow was sore with her new sorrow.

"Oh, my boy!" she sobbed, tears raining over her cheeks, "my tall, handsome Tom! Never to see him again—never to hear his voice—never to feel the embrace of his strong arms. It is very bitter! Oh, Tom, my boy!"

The crickets piped out their shrill melody, the autumn wind rustled the tawny chestnuts, and the noisy brook babbled. The old cottage, under the misty splendor of the autumn moon, with that bowed figure on the doorstep, looked unutterably lonely and desolate.

And the mother's poor heart was full of wordless agony, while her strained, tear-blinded eyes seemed to see that nameless grave far away in a Southern valley—her son's grave, above which her tears could never flow.

A quick, sharp step crushed the crisp grass; a tall shadow darkened the autumn moonlight lying in silver rifts on the white boards of the kitchen floor.

"Little mother" looked up. There was a moment of breathless silence, and then a sudden cry—a [illegible] intense, uplifting [illegible] all the silent night took up the sound, and hundreds of echoes repeated it amid the surrounding hills.

"Oh, Tom! my boy! is it you?"

"Yes, it is I, 'little mother!'"

He clasped her close, covering her wet cheeks with passionate kisses.

"Oh, Tom, I have suffered so," she sobbed at last. "I thought you were dead, my darling! but you have come back, my brave, handsome soldier!"

She raised herself from his embrace, and, putting her hands on his shoulders, looked steadily in his eyes.

They met her searching gaze, clear and fearless.

"Tom," she said, with a little laugh that was half a sob, "you've come home to me pure and true as you went—my good boy has kept his promise!"

"Yes, thank heaven! I have kept my promise!" he answered, with a solemn tenderness in his handsome eyes; "and it has been my salvation! The temptation was a sore one, and, if I had yielded, I should have died, like several of my comrades, poor fellows! But the thought of you saved me, as I seemed to see your face between me and the luring glass. It was all your work, 'little mother!'"

"And God has given me my reward! He has given me back my boy, whom I mourned as dead!" responded his mother, with many tears.

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Or, The Mystery of a Night

By T. C. Harbaugh

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CHAPTER XVII.

SARA THORNTON'S STORY.

IT WAS a week after the death of Glidden that I accidentally came face to face with Sara Thornton in one of the parks which I was crossing in my way downtown. The woman had avoided me, for I had made several calls at her house during the interval with the same result. Mrs. Thornton was "out" and the maid did not know when she would return. I was in hopes of getting a glimpse of Milly, the maid, if for nothing else but to assure her that she was forgiven the little indiscretion. She, I was confident, knew but little of the main mystery beyond what she had heard me tell the detective, but if she was in hiding in Mrs. Thornton's domicile I was not rewarded with a sight of her.

This time Sara Thornton could not elude me, and finding herself fairly caught, she made the best of the, to her, unpleasant situation and partially surrendered.

I wondered as I looked into her face, which was strangely white, if she knew of Madam Wray's whereabouts.

"I presume, Mr. Taverny," said she, striking out boldly as if she suspected what my first quiz would be, "you are still in the dark concerning the identity of the lady of the night of the third."

"Not quite so much so," I answered, watching her narrowly.

"Ah!" then she suddenly broke off and remained silent.

"You remember," said I, "that you failed to introduce me to Mrs. Taverny at Madam Wray's soiree."

Her gaze suddenly shifted from my face.

"Are you still willing that there shall be no fencing between us?" I pursued.

"I am, Mr. Taverny."

"Then what has become of madam?"

"What, don't you know?" she said, showing her pearly teeth. "Madam has gone to Europe."

I stared at her. Then she did not know the truth, for I doubted not that Madam Wray was still an inmate of the old house in Golden Alley if she had not been carried therefrom a corpse.

"When did madam sail?" I asked.

"She took passage on the 'Victoria.'"

"Alone?"

"No. She was accompanied."

"By whom?"

"Come, Mr. Taverny. There should no longer be any concealment now that Madam Therese is out of the way. Where shall we go?"

I mentioned the "Dalray," which was in the neighborhood of the park and we were soon seated in its second floor parlor with the sunlight streaming in at the wide windows and touching the face of my companion. I waited for her to proceed.

"It is not a long story," began the woman. "Ten years ago one of the richest men of another city died. He had been a good man in many ways, but he was eccentric. He left what even now is a great fortune. His family consisted of a daughter, and when he came to make his will he was under the influence of several people who were playing for some of his riches. The most important clause of the will and also the strangest, provided that his daughter should be married before she reached her twenty-first year.

"Eric Silvern, the testator, placed as guardian over his child a man who was as cold-blooded as a lizard. I shall not name this individual now, Mr. Taverny, for certain reasons. He was a man of the world, cool, desperately calculating, and a ticket-of-leave man, who had done time in an English penal colony. While serving there he came across a woman whom he had heard of, but had never seen. This member of my sex had been the high priestess of an order which almost bankrupted several English earls by a gigantic and subtle swindle. It is not strange that these two people should find something between them in common. They at once became partners in a scheme which should be perfected the moment they were released from durance.

"Time came when the doors of the penal prison swung open for both of them. The man escaped first and came to this country where he became the trusted friend and confidant of Eric Silvern. By and by the woman came also and with the funds which she had extracted from the pockets of her titled dupes she managed to set up a fashionable establishment here. Strange to relate, she had not heard of her companion's whereabouts beyond a rumor that the vessel which carried him home was lost at sea with all on board. What was her surprise then, when she was confronted by this man in her own house in the midst of the social season. From that moment she was in the hands of this personage. But let us go back."

Sara Thornton paused a moment and looked out of the window.

"The birthday of Eric Silvern's daughter approached again," she resumed. "The girl had grown into beautiful womanhood though she had passed the greater part of her life behind curtained windows. If she were not married before the attainment of her twenty-first birthday the bulk of her father's wealth would fall to an heir across the water, a man of no reputation and, if rumor was correct, a criminal. In order to carry out the intent of the will the man who had been made guardian of the daughter hit upon a most ingenious plan. The girl had no suitors; indeed she had been but little in the company of the opposite sex beyond her father and the butler. It was resolved to purchase a bridegroom. This was done for the purpose of keeping the wealth where the ex-convict as guardian of the girl could handle it. It was a scheme worthy of the man who had worn stripes under a tropical sun.

"The plan was faithfully carried out. But few were let into the secret. The victim was won over by certain arguments, and blindly carried out the will of her astute master. Mr. Taverny," concluded Sara Thornton, looking me in the face, as her own grew a trifle paler, "that woman is your wife!"

Though I had anticipated such an ending to the woman's narrative I was startled when the announcement fell from her lips.

"Tell me, then, who was the girl found dead in Odeon Park," I exclaimed.

"Oh, you are harking back to that tragedy, are you?" smiled the woman.

"I have been told that she resembled some one, doubtless my bride of the third."

"She did. She was the counterfeit presentment of the woman whom you wedded sight unseen," answered Sara Thornton. "She turned up unexpectedly at No. 99 Holden square the night before the wedding. The ex-convict was on guard. Had the daughter of Eric Silvern caught sight of her duplicate, if I may use these words, there might have been a scene at your wedding. The man on guard knew this, and the result was that the girl was found dead in the park. Years before it is said Eric Silvern contracted a marriage while in France and there is little doubt that the girl who came to 99 Holden square the night before your marriage was the result of that union.

"Mr. Taverny," Sara Thornton proceeded, as her gaze wandered once more toward the street, "I believe I have made you acquainted with all you should know now."

She rose and paced the room with her hands behind her. For a moment I regarded her in silence, not wishing to recall her from her deep reverie, but all at once I said:

"You know the murderer, Sara. The name of that man—the ex-convict—is no secret in your mind——"

"I know!" she said coolly, turning suddenly upon me.

"And you shield him."

She did not speak.

"You know who the woman is who came from the land of reparation and set up her establishment in this city."

"I know!" she repeated in the same tones.

"Then, in the name of justice, speak!" cried I, rising and crossing over to her at the window. "You know how Glidden died——"

"Glidden?" she cried, falling back with a face that rivaled the snow in hue. "Glidden—dead? I have been out of town. I came back but this morning. I know nothing about Glidden."

"He is dead—murdered," said I.

She caught her breath and reached out her hand to clutch my arm. It fell short of the mark and she reeled back.

"You have a heart, woman," I went on. "You and Glidden were friends. You have it in your power to strike a blow of vengeance, for the hand that slew the detective took the life of the girl who came to the nest in Holden square."

"How was Glidden killed?" she asked, leaning toward me.

"A downward stroke over the shoulder to the heart with a poinard-like weapon."

"The same! the same!" rang from her throat. "There is no mistake."

"Then you know who killed Glidden?"

"I know!"

"And you will speak?"

"Not now."

"Then cursed be your silence!" I exclaimed. "You would blight my life, rendering me unhappy by withholding the name of my bride and her whereabouts. You will shield the murderer of the girl and the detective. You will do all this. Madam has not gone to Europe."

"What!" gasped the woman. "Not gone abroad? Where is she, then?"

"Dead mayhap in Golden Alley."

She gave a quick cry and sprang toward the door.

"And you have not told me?" she cried. "Miles Taverny, when you find the daughter of Eric Silvern, you find your mysterious bride."

With this, and a look which haunts me yet, Sara Thornton opened the door, and the next moment I was the only occupant of the parlor. I heard her mad steps on the staircase and then all became silent.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FIERY STAIRCASE.

"When you have found Eric Silvern's daughter you have found your wife!"

These words rang in my ears a long while after the woman who had uttered them had vanished. The lights of the parlor seemed to swim mistily before my eyes, a confused babel of sounds came up from the street, but Sara Thornton was gone and I was the sole occupant of the room.

Slowly I departed, looking for the woman on the street, but she was not in sight.

Seeking not my lodgings, but the club, I entered and passed into the billiard room.

"I'm here yet," said a voice at my elbow, and I turned to confront Godron Jenks, the borrower.

"I thought you were going to sail on the 'Victoria' with your rich patron, Demayne."

"I thought so, too, Taverny, but the old fellow changed his notion at the last minute and I'm on the shoals yet."

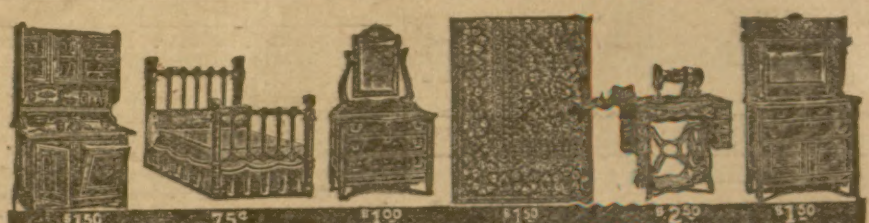
"What happened to alter his resolution?" I eagerly asked. "It must have been something of the utmost importance."

"It was."

"Where is he?"

"I haven't seen him for four days now. He's a queer old chap, rich as Croesus, but peculiar. Now he has one residence and now another. Once he had rooms at the 'Clarendon,' but he suddenly gave them up and took others in another part of the city. He thought he would throw me off the track, Taverny, but I wasn't to be hood-

(Continued on page six.)



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Selfish people [illegible] ing self-sacri[illegible]g.

After burying the hatchet some men go out and dig up an ax.

And many a politician makes his mark only by throwing mud.

It's dead easy to convince a man that he is smarter than you are.

The man who earns the money isn't always the one who gets it.

Circus tumblers and baseball pitchers are not at their best when full.

Lots of men are as truthful as the late G. W. but they can't prove it.

The beauty of some women is enough to give a man painter's colic.

When common sense takes a vacation it is time to stand from under.

Perhaps a woman tells secrets because she is afraid of forgetting them.

The bride is given away at the altar, and occasionally the groom is sold.

It's better to be judged by your appearance than by your disappearance.

The woman whose face is her fortune is sure to go broke sooner or later.

Some women seem to be ashamed to eat real food in a public dining place.

If a man's acquaintances don't know that he is in love it's a sign that he isn't.

When it comes to kissing in the dark, a homely girl is just as good as a pretty one.

A fool and his money are soon parted, but it's different with a lazy boy and a warm bed.

A mule hitched to a buggy looks almost as unnatural as the picture on a magazine cover.

One of the surprising things in this old world is the ease with which some sinners make money.

It's always safe to reserve your congratulations until the pair have been married at least a year.

Do you know of any man who is trying to get rid of his wealth because it doesn't bring happiness?

Always tell the truth and the chances are that you will not be mistaken for a member of your State Legislature.

When a woman becomes so angry that she can't talk she begins to think she has acquired wonderful self-control.

(Continued from page five.)

winked in that manner, I just got busy and trailed him to the new place."

"And where was that, pray?"

"The last place where you'd look for a millionaire," grinned Jenks. "I tracked him into Golden Alley and nearly got my napper taken for my officiousness."

"And he is there now?" I inquired.

"Can't say, but it's likely. I say, Taverny, there's some unread chapter in the life of Tracy Demayne."

"What makes you think so, Godron?"

"He's got a secret that he guards as if his whole life depends on it's remaining a secret."

"You've been balked whenever you attempted to unravel the skein, eh?"

"Yes, but I've been on the fringe of fortune once or twice. Taverny, do people who have led upright lives wear a brand between their shoulder blades?"

"Not usually," I replied. "Does Demayne?"

"He's got something like a mark there," was the answer. "I came upon him once at the hotel. He forgot to lock his bathroom and the moment he spied me he up and let fly a heavy brush, which would have marked me for life if it hadn't missed. But I had seen the strange scar between the shoulders."

"What was it like?"

"It was the letter 'C.'"

"Since then, I suppose, Mr. Demayne hasn't been as sociable as he was before."

"Why, I haven't seen him but once since then, and that's the time I tracked him into Golden Alley."

When Jenks had no more to impart I saw him move off with infinite pleasure, and betook myself once more toward the house where I had last seen Madam Wray.

There were symptoms of a shower, for the night had suddenly grown dark and the atmosphere full of promise of dampness.

What had become of Chrystal I did not know, and I had put out of my life Milly the maid, but not Sara Thornton and the girl of Acorn Row.

The mouth of Golden Alley seemed to yawn for a victim, and I plunged into it. The old house, of more than one mystery, looked mysterious against the lighted heavens, and I slipped down the side way to the low fence.

But I was destined to start before I could place my hand on the boards for a leap into the garden.

All at once my gaze fell upon a motionless figure near the fence, but partially screened by the shadow of a leaning tree, the only one in the garden.

Holding my breath I leaned forward for a better look and beheld—Sara Thornton!

She had not seen me, and her whole attention seemed to be centered on the house itself. She stood perfectly still with her face just half revealed and one of her hands concealed beneath the folds of her dark dress.

What she was doing there at that hour I could not contrive, though I believed that it had something to do with the mystery I was trying to solve.

[illegible] she moved at [illegible] door.

I could scarcely follow her movements now, since she had taken herself out of the little light that pervaded the scene, but I was convinced that she intended to enter the house itself.

All at once she fell back till I could once more notice her and resumed her statuesque poise.

The door of the house opened. Sara Thornton, in the shadow of the solitary tree, did not move. A human figure came partly out of the premises and then drew back. I thought I detected a look of disappointment in the watcher's eyes.

Presently the figure came out again as if the coast had been found clear. It passed Sara Thornton so close that she might have touched it by putting out her hand.

How eagerly this strange, yet beautiful woman eyed the person who looked like a common individual as he moved forward, opening a narrow gate which let him into the by-alley. At first I thought she would follow him, but she let him go and he passed close to my post.

When I looked at Sara Thornton again she had gone forward to the little door.

This time she threw a cautious glance around ere she pressed the latch and pulled the door open. In another moment she had passed into the house.

The door closed behind her without noise. She was gone, and I was the puzzled spectator of her movements.

I felt that beyond the door of that house lay the solution of the mystery of my wedding night.

For a moment I hesitated, then I scaled the fence and landed in the garden.

But at that moment, and just as my hand found the latch, I heard a noise to my right, and a man rose from the only clump of weeds in the garden.

To my dismay it was the irrepressible Jenks.

"Why didn't you follow him?" blurted the fellow.

"Follow whom?" I asked, looking him in the face and mentally cursing him for his unwarranted interference at that time.

"Why, the man who just came out of the house," was the reply. "That was Tracy Demayne."

"Are you sure?"

"Never surer of anything in my life. Don't I know his peculiar gait?"

"Why didn't you follow him?" I exclaimed.

"Because there's something just as interesting here," was the answer. "The woman who just went in——"

"Did you know her?"

"Who doesn't?" smiled Jenks. "That's Sara Thornton, the woman who takes more than a passing interest in Demayne's affairs. I've seen her before."

"Well?"

"I'm going to see what lay she's working," he continued. "Ten chances to one that she didn't recognize Tracy Demayne in his little make-up. You're going in to investigate, eh, Taverny?"

"I prefer to do my investigating alone," I said curtly. "If necessary I'll report at the club in an hour."

"Not on your life! I've got a little interest in Tracy Demayne's affairs myself. We will see what Sara is going to do in this house——"

"I will see," and I pushed him back.

For once in his life, at least, Godron Jenks showed his teeth viciously and resisted.

Thinking that I had gotten clear of the interferer, I advanced once more and pushed the door open. I did not look back to see what had become of him.

The next moment, and just as I was in the act of closing the door on him, a bright light flashed across the room. It came from above, and the next instant the whole stairway, which I could now perceive, was revealed.

"It's fire!" cried a voice behind me.

I did not wait to see Jenks, who undoubtedly had entered after me, but darted forward.

It was fire!

The entire staircase was a sheet of flame, which was growing each moment.

"My God!" shrilled the voice of Godron Jenks.

He had seen that which at that terrible moment had caught my own eyes. There was a break in the flames which were eating up the staircase, and I paused with a shudder which rendered me speechless, for at the top, her face terribly white and ghastly, stood Sara Thornton with the form of Chrystal in her arms!

CHAPTER XIX.

MADAM WRAY SPEAKS.

Hard upon the sight which burst from the blazing stairway came a thrilling cry behind me, and I knew that Jenks had fled and that I was alone to confront the flaming horror.

For a moment I stood horror-stricken and then—the figures on the staircase vanished.

What had become of Sara Thornton and Chrystal, I did not know.

Almost at the same instant the burning stairway fell in with a deafening crash and the flames, leaping higher for a minute, died suddenly away in dense darkness.

This state of affairs did not continue long, for the blinding light burst forth once more and I fell back, realizing that the house in Golden Alley was doomed.

As I passed rapidly into the back yard I looked up and saw that flames were leaping from the windows, cracking in lurid crimson against the sky, and the alarm had been given.

More than horrified and not wishing to be found in the vicinity of the fire, I hurried away, turning into the main alley without being perceived by those first on the scene.

I could not remain on the terrible spot. That it was the last of Sara Thornton and Chrystal, I verily believed, and with thoughts which are indescribable lending speed to my limbs, I darted off.

The terror haunted me all the way back to Misery Row, and I could not tear from my thoughts the sights I had been forced to witness.

Suddenly there came a rapping on my door and I jerked it open.

Who should face me but Madam Wray!

She little resembled the woman whom I had been bedizened with jewels but a few days before. Her rich garments had been discarded and her pallid face—the same I had seen in the house in Golden Alley—seemed within the last few hours to have ten years of life added to it.

She stepped at the threshold and gave me a searching look.

At last she moved forward and dropped into the chair near the table while I leaned against the edge of it and looked down into her face.

"I have come to you, Mr. Taverny," she began, and stopped as if she had suddenly caught herself on forbidden ground.

"I am listening, madam," I responded and then waited for her to proceed.

Instead of resuming she again looked me in the eye and leaned forward with an expression of pity.

"You haven't found your bride yet?" came from her scarcely moving lips.

"I am still in the dark and must continue so unless you reveal the truth."

She passed her hand before her eyes, and, rising suddenly, began to pace the room.

"The truth, is it?" she said. "The truth, you say, Miles Taverny? Would it not be best if you were left forever in the dark?"

"No! Let the light come, no matter who is struck by it," said I. "I am convinced that Sara Thornton has not told all."

"What did she say?" cried Madam Wray. "What did that woman tell you?"

"She talked about Eric Silvern."

The woman started violently.

"Yes, and also about two ticket-of-leave people."

She went quite white again. In a moment her hand was clutching my arm.

"Did—she—mention—names?" she almost gasped.

"Sara knows," I answered evasively.

Madam Wray did not speak, but sat staring at me with eyes which seemed to read the innermost tablets of my soul.

"Then I need not speak," she said at last.

"Not unless you can clear up some of the darkness which Sara Thornton left in my pathway. You know about the ticket-of-leave people?"

"I do," and the words seemed to be dragged from her by the pincers of truth, damning truth. "I know, for I am the woman."

"And you know Eric Silvern?"

"Yes."

"And Tracy Demayne?"

Her head sank upon her bosom in an affirmative nod.

"Mr. Taverny, listen," she burst forth. "You saw me last in the house in Golden Alley. I thought we were never to meet again in this world. I am Louise Demayne——"

"His wife?"

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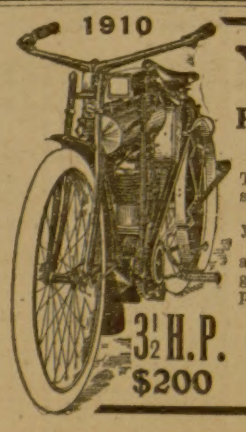

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"In which he said that if his child were not wedded before a certain age his property should be diverted from her?"

"I see. Sara Thornton knew that, eh?"

"Yes."

"That child was married on the night before she reached the age specified in her father's will," continued Madam Wray. "She was married without knowing who the bridegroom was. And the bridegroom was bought with a price."

I did not speak.

"Tracy Demayne must have had some mesmeric influence over both Eric Silvern and the daughter. The man who married her got a neat sum for his compliance with the terms, and she inherited her father's thousands. Was there ever such a plot in this world of plots?"

"And what was your share of the spoil?" I asked.

"Mine?" she laughed. "Mine? He got it all. He will eventually get the last penny of that young girl's estate."

I thought of the fiery staircase and leaned toward the woman.

"Eric Silvern," said I, "has no heir."

Once more the woman was on her feet, and her eyes were glaring at me incredulously.

"No heir?" she exclaimed. "What has become of your bride, Miles Taverny?"

"You must ask the fire-fiend which licked up the house in Golden Alley."

"It is false, it must be!" she cried. "This is not the retribution which ought to overtake the house of Silvern for that exacting will," she went on half under her breath.

"Chrystal was doomed when the burning staircase fell," said I.

"Tell me."

She settled back in the chair and listened to my adventures in Golden Alley.

At the conclusion of my narrative she remained silent for a moment and then went toward the door.

"I pity you, Miles Taverny," she said in a hard, cold voice. "But isn't it justice? You were bought with a price."

"But," cried I, as I writhed under the arrow of scorn, "I intended to consummate that marriage. I love Chrystal. I——"

"It is too late if what you have told me is true. The holy bonds have been riven by fire."

"Yes."

"But for you the young girl might be living now. I pity you, Miles Taverny, from the bottom of my seared heart."

With this she grasped the knob and looked back into my face.

"We make the beds in which we lie," she went on. "I have made mine. Tracy Demayne is the one—the only one—left now for punishment. I never saw him after our return from the accursed penal isle till he appeared at my last soiree uninvited. I fainted and they called it heart trouble. How these men of science lie sometimes. I simply saw my convict husband and swooned."

Once more she laughed bitterly and opened the door.

"Where is Tracy Demayne so-called?" I cried.

She came back to the table, and, catching up a pen, scribbled an address upon a pad lying there face downward.

In another moment she was once more at the door and I caught her eye for the last time.

On the stair I heard her footfalls for a brief space of time and then the opening and closing of a door on the lower floor.

She was gone—had passed out of my life, this strange woman from the land of retribution where evil-doers expiate their crimes under a burning Australian sun.

I glanced down at the writing on the pad and suddenly caught it up.

Rain was pattering like mad against the windows, but this did not deter me. If a flood had dashed against the panes I would have gone straight to the address which the hand of Madam Wray had left for my inspection.

It was a fearsome ride, halfway across the city in a taxicab under the electric globes and through the pelting storm. The taxicab at last turned into a narrow street and drew to the gutter. I had reached my destination.

Into a hallway I dashed, without knocking, and bounded up a stair as if an avenging hand was guiding me. There was a door on my right in the short corridor above. I wrenched the knob and pulled the door open.

A sharp cry greeted me as I went forward, and, looking straight ahead, I knew that once more I stood face to face with Tracy Demayne, the man who had paid me ten thousand dollars to marry the unseen bride.

CHAPTER XX.

LIGHT FROM DARKNESS.

The arch plotter, the man from penal land, sat in an arm-chair before an old-fashioned table upon which stood, at his elbow, a bottle and a glass.

He started upon seeing me, but his countenance suddenly resumed its immobility as if he had perfect control over himself. I closed the door behind me and advanced. That I stood before the double murderer, the man who had slain the girl found in Odeon Park, and Glidden, the detective, there was no room for doubt in my mind. And yet he could look at me with the coolness of a bravo.

"I'm glad you've come," he began with the semblance of a smile at the corners of his finely-chiseled lips.

I remembered what Jenks had told me—that there was between his shoulders a branded "C," the mark of the convict, which he was destined to carry to his grave.

"I have come," said I, watching him, "whether it gives you pleasure or not."

"To ask questions, eh? Remember the compact of the third," he grinned maliciously.

"To the four winds with the compact!" I exclaimed. "I own it not any more."

He reached out and drew the half-filled glass toward him, all the while making a study of my face.

"You got your ten thousand, didn't you, Miles Taverny?" he asked.

"Yes, the accursed money!" I cried. "It shall be yours again for the asking."

"But I want it not."

"No? Then tell me, Tracy Demayne, ex-convict, the husband of Madam Wray, the murderer of the girl found in Odeon Park, the assassin of Homer Glidden, who was on your trail."

What could I not hurl at this merciless wretch, and as the words of bitter accusation leaped from my tongue, I bent forward to see how he would receive the assault.

I more than half wished that he would spring from his chair and rush upon me. I braced myself for the attack, for vengeance had given me superhuman strength, but instead he did not stir and his face went red and white by turns.

"Poor fool!" he said at last in mock sympathy, and his voice seemed like a piercing arrow, which only maddened me still more. "So you have repented of your bargain?"

"No, if you could restore my wife—my bride of the night of the third, I would be willing to let you go, even though your hands are red with the blood of the innocent."

"How excruciatingly clever," he said, laughing aloud. "Truly, you would make a model husband."

"My wife! my wife!" and I was at his side and my hand fell upon his shoulder which I clutched in my ire. "I have seen terrible sights this night—the blazing stairway, the man who stole out of the house in Golden Alley just before the fire demon sprang to his work, the two women, who stood at the top of the staircase framed in fire—I say I have seen all these things and——"

I paused. Should I tell him of my recent interview with Madam Wray? Perhaps that would bring him to his feet and give me a chance to avenge the dead.

"So," he laughed, "so you want your wife? Well, I hardly blame you."

He raised the glass to his lips and drained it.

"Now, we will talk, Mr. Taverny," he went on, his voice suddenly changing as his face went white again behind the last word. "Now, sir, we will talk for the last time."

His hand executed a gesture toward a chair, but I did not occupy it.

"I have half a mind to offer you some of the devil's elixir," he proceeded, glancing at the bottle on the table. "But no, you are too young yet. Fate may yet be kind to you, Miles Taverny. As for me, it has reached the limit. This," he held up the empty glass before my eyes, "this innocent looking object would throw a chemist into ecstacies. He would find in the lees before me the most subtle death agent ever devised by the devilish brain of our race, no, I will not say our race, for the poison which I have just drank was brewed in the Australian bush, and kills within a few minutes after taking!"

I felt my blood course thrillingly and cold to my finger tips, and I could not help gazing at this wretch, who, if he spoke truly, would soon be beyond the pale of human justice.

"Your wife," he resumed, "knows not whom she wedded the night of the third. It was a clever play, and yet I was carrying out the last will and testament of Eric Silvern. Strange, you say? There are many strange things in this world. So you were in the house in Golden Alley when it fell into the web of the fire fiend? You missed me at the 'Clarendon' when you went up to room 444. It was the miss of a hair's breadth, for I had just gone when you came. Perhaps that was lucky for both of us. You must have found the trail that led to Golden Alley. This shows that, with some training, you would equal Glidden, the detective."

"Whom you killed?"

"Yes. Why deny it, Miles Taverny? If you were hounded by a bloodhound, human or otherwise, wouldn't you turn upon the beast? Aye, that you would. It was Glidden or myself."

"Your wife—the woman whom you married in convict land——" I began anew, when he suddenly threw up his hand.

"There!" he broke in. "We won't discuss Madam just yet. I have no time for side issues just now, for the virus of death is working."

"But I know that Madam Wray is your wife, branded, no doubt, like yourself—between the shoulder blades."

He nodded with a smile, which vanished almost as soon as it appeared.

"I'm waiting for some one," he continued. "She will surely come before I depart."

I started violently and looked into his face. Whom was he waiting for?

All at once the hand which rested on the edge of the table slid from it and dropped at his side. At the same moment his lips quivered and his eyes got a strange light.

"It's not quite here yet," he said, reading my thoughts. "You can't gauge the working of the draught exactly, but almost. I feel the cold tide approaching my heart. She will come first."

His words, coolly spoken, drove my answer from my thoughts.

At that moment I heard beyond the door the sound of footsteps.

He heard it, too, for he turned his head a little and fixed his gaze on the door. All at once his head fell back as he vainly clutched at the table, and I was at his side.

"She's coming!" he cried. "She's just out yonder."

"Who is out there, in the hall?"

"Ah, don't you know?"

The door opened.

"Your wife!" Tracy Demayne cried with an effort, "your wife, Miles Taverny!"

I was looking across the room toward the door. A figure darkened it and Tracy Demayne cried out again:

"Your bride—Miles Taverny!"

I uttered a startling cry, for Sara Thornton stood before me.

"No, not that woman?" I exclaimed.

Sara came in and stood in front of the tableau displayed for her inspection.

"What did he say?" she cried, singling me out as her face went deadly pale.

"He called you the bride of the third."

A smile brightened for a moment the face of Sara Thornton and then passed.

"No, Mr. Taverny," she said. "But, Tracy Demayne——"

She was at the table in a moment; her face almost touched the one framed by the dark trimmings of the chair.

"He is not yet gone!" she cried, bounding up suddenly and darting into the corridor. I

(Continued on page fifteen.)

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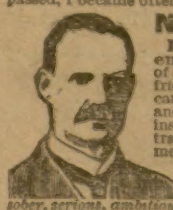
I Drank Heavily

Averaged 1 Quart Whiskey Daily.

I started young, with beer and ale; "graduated" to hard liquors. Was proud of my ability to drink so much; at earlier age could stand it pretty well. As time passed, I became often **unable to work properly.**



NO WIFE FOR ME
I could not keep in steady employment, lost fine chances of marrying, injured health, lost true friends; was "*down and out.*" I became a human derelict & like thousands of others, might have died in insane asylum, poor-house or as a tramp. But rare good fortune befell me; **after 18 years as a drunkard, I was suddenly** changed from a **drunken, sick, castoff wretch** to a *sober, serious, ambitious man in 3 days.* That was years ago. I would to-day, no sooner swallow beer, ale, whiskey or other alcoholic drink than I would take carbolic acid. My cure was marvelous & lasting! During 8 years **I have given the same remedies to over 6000 men & women** who had disease of alcoholism! It is absolutely safe, genuine & certain.

GUARANTEED 3 DAYS' CURE

My home treatment cures the disease of alcoholism in 72 hours; legal guarantee. **All craving is lost;** never comes again. Health, strength, brain power rapidly regained. Ailments (usually due to alcohol) such as rheumatism, weak eyes, back-ache, heart-palpitation, dyspepsia, failing eyesight, over-stoutness; stomach, kidney, liver and urinary troubles, constipation, nervous debility, general weakness, melancholy—usually *disappear when the craving for alcohol goes.*

Women Cure Drinkers

Employers, wives, mothers, sisters, can cure men with or without their knowledge, bring great joy & peace of mind. The rescued drinker will be enthusiastic in praise; he *will enjoy life* as he never could do while drinking. **Will power restored.**

BOOK FREE Let me send my new, very interesting book, "*Confessions of an Alcohol Slave,*" it describes all, gives valuable advice to drinkers, morphine, opium or cocaine takers (male or female) or their friends. Sent in plain wrapper, **free, postpaid.** Write for it to-day, mention whether you desire to cure yourself or another & give a few particulars. My information *costs you nothing;* may mean years of happiness—*has brought it to thousands!* Correspondence strictly confidential. SUCCESS GUARANTEED. Address,
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Be independent and work for yourself, or take up the clothing business as a side line. It will pay you well. You need no money or experience. We furnish you everything to start. We are one of the oldest tailoring establishments in the business. The making of good quality tailoring has been our business for many years.

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HUBBY'S SPECIALTY.

My wife sure has me faded
When it comes to talk;
But when it comes to listening
I've got her beat a block.

FREE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR EVERYBODY

ROCHESTER, N. Y., April 9, 1910.—The Directors of Franklin Institute today voted to prepare candidates for the next Railway Mail Clerk Examinations free of charge. A postal containing the applicant's name, addressed Dept. R 197, is sufficient application.

Glad He Went.

"There was a thunder of applause when I left the stage."
"Serves you right. You shouldn't stay on so long."

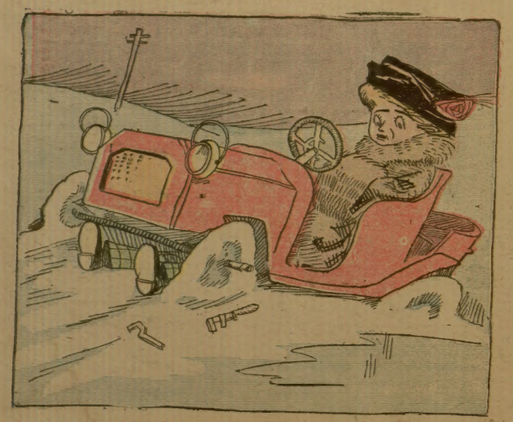
Bitten.

Hiram Hardapple—Ha! Ha! Poor old Silas Weatherby got stung again. He saw an ad in a magazine that stated for 50 cents they'd send him one of the finest profiles of Lincoln ever designed.
Zeke Crawford—And did Silas bite?
Hiram Hardapple—Yes, he sent the 50 cents and they sent him one of them thar new Lincoln pennies.

Not Any Sometimes.

"You should not always be knocking people."
"I'm not; I'm merely telling the truth about them."
"Well, what's the difference?"

SO SELFISH.



Mrs. N. Peck—Henry, I wonder if you suspect that it's cold up here? Of course, so long as you are nice and warm nothing else matters. I should think you might come out and push the car till we reach a farmhouse.

Far From Encouraging.

"Well," said the leading man as he appeared behind the scenes at the drop of the curtain, "how did the new play take?"
"Sentiment is somewhat divided," responded the manager. "One-half of the audience is outside talking about the execution of the play."
"And the other half?"
"On the inside talking about the execution of the actors."

FREE DEAFNESS TREATMENT.

A successful institution makes this remarkable offer to send free medicines to prove their ability to cure Deafness, Head Noises and Catarrh by a new method. Address Dr. Branaman Remedy Co., 1166 Walnut St., Kansas City, Mo.

Gave Pop Away.

Teacher—How many quarts in a gallon?
Tommy—Three.
Teacher—Oh! no; you mean four.
Tommy—No; three. I guess I ought to know. Father is a milkman.

Every Lady Read This.

Years ago when I was a sufferer, an old nurse told me of a wonderful cure for Leucorrhoea, Displacements, Painful Periods, Uterine and Ovarian troubles. It cured me in one month. It is a simple, harmless lotion that can be prepared by any one having the recipe. I will send it free to every suffering sister who writes to me. Address Mrs. A. Hudnut South Bend, Indiana.

Optimistic.

Dusty Dennis—Gee, pard, didn't it worry you when dat constable said he was going to investigate you?
Sandy Pikes—Naw! All great men are investigated dese days.

J. P.

Those suffering from weakness and lack of vigor should take JUVEN PILLS. One box will tell a story of marvelous results. This medicine has more rejuvenating, vitalizing force than has ever before been offered. Sent postpaid only on receipt of this advertisement and $1. Made by its originators, C. I. HOOD CO., proprietors Hood's Sarsaparilla, LOWELL, MASS. (2)

The Advantage of Experience.

She (with a pout)—A man always treats his second wife better.
He (blandly)—After a man has once got rid of a balky horse he uses more intelligence in picking out another.

THE FLIRT.

I asked her if there was a vacant spot
In her heart and I do declare
She blasted my hopes right on the dot
When she gave me a vacant stare.

That's What He Did.

Bacon—Everybody is talking about a man out West who slept for three weeks.
Egbert—Woke up and found himself famous?

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Agents wanted in every county to sell the popular Novelty Knives, with name, address, photo, lodge emblem, etc., on handle. Send stamp for catalog. AGENTS EARN $75 to $300 A MONTH. (We show you how.)

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TICKLISH

Both Bad Enough.

"I don't know which is the worse," remarked the man who seemed to be thinking aloud.
"Speaking of what?" queried the party who had a touch of the rubber habit.
"A joke one can't see the point of or a point one can't see the joke of," answered the noisy thinker.

Great.

Stranger—Where can I get a good drink of rye, my son?
Tim—Right over dere dey sells de movin' picture brand. After yer drink it yer sees movin' pictures widout payin' a nickel extra.

A Slow Train.

Brakeman (on Southern railroad)—Passengers is not allowed on th' platforms, sir, when th' train is in motion.
Passenger—Beg pardon; I will go in. I did not notice that the train was in motion.

No Need of Haste.

Anxious Citizen (in danger of losing a train)—Why don't you go faster, instead of dragging along this way?
Street Car Motorman—Wot's th' use? I can't quit till eight o'clock, anyhow.

Only Kind Left.

"Fairies and naiads seem to be a thing of the past," remarked the sentimental traveler.
"Yes," rejoined the hardware drummer, as he gazed from the car at a W. C. T. U. poster on a dead wall, "but the dry ads are still with us."

Scared.

Matchett—Why did Charles quit calling on Miss Waite?
Wallmaner—Her mother put up on the parlor door a sign that read: "No Admittance Except on Business."

TO WOMEN WHO DREAD MOTHERHOOD

Information How They May Give Birth to Happy, Healthy Children Absolutely Without Pain—Sent Free.

No woman need any longer dread the pains of childbirth; or remain childless. Dr. J. H. Dye has devoted his life to relieving the sorrows of women. He has proved that all pain at childbirth may be entirely banished, and he will gladly tell you how it may be done absolutely free of charge. Send your name and address to Dr. J. H. Dye, 200 Lewis Block, Buffalo, N. Y., and he will send you, postpaid, his wonderful book which tells how to give birth to happy, healthy children, absolutely without pain; also how to cure sterility. Do not delay but write today.

COMFORTING.

He—You are the first and only girl I ever loved, Ethel!
She—My, Reggy! What a lot of fun you have ahead of you!

Different Now.

Stern Parent—When I was your age, young man, I wuh accumulating money of my own instead of begging it from my old father.
Graceless Son—Well, I'll take your word for it, dad. It was easier to unload gold bricks those days than it is now.

A Good Opinion of Herself.

Husband—How conceited you are, Effie! You're always looking at yourself in the glass.
Wife—I'm sure I am not. I don't think I'm half as pretty as I really am.

The Point of View.

Average Woman—What? Not going to church today?
Average Man—What's the use? Our new preacher is so near-sighted he can't tell whether we're there or not.

Brother's Opinion.

"I'm going to marry your sister, Johnny, and take her far away. What do you think of that?"
"I guess I can stand it if you can."

A Shrewd Fellow.

"You say he is a financial genius?"
"He is. He frequently talks his wife into letting him spend some of the money he makes."

Up to Date.

Clara—How did Mr. Ruyters Kramp take your refusal to his proposal?
Carrie—In shorthand; he's going to use it in his new story.

FROM REPORT OF THE ARMY MANEUVERS.

At this juncture Gen. Jinks fell back suddenly upon his base.

BIG COMPANY DISTRIBUTES BIG MEDICAL BOOK FREE.

The well known Pierce Co. of Buffalo, is advertising its business by giving away free of charge copies of the "People's Common Sense Medical Adviser." This famous book has 1,008 pages with engravings and color plates and the copies of the new revised edition that are given away are bound in cloth. This book treats of Anatomy, Hygiene, Medicine, Mother and Babe and every family ought to grasp this opportunity to get a copy free by writing to Dr. R. V. Pierce at the address given in the advertisement on page 14 of this paper.

Making Progress.

Weigler—How is your son, the young surgeon, getting on?
Gausler—First rate. He's improving every day. He recently operated on his tenth patient and the man lived for nearly twenty hours.

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and roundness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results. Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

Almost.

"It's wonderful how these Italian women can carry so much around on their heads, isn't it?"
"Yes, indeed. They almost equal their American sisters."

Reason Enough.

"Whom was she wearing black for—her last husband?"
"No, for her next. She looks so stunning in it."

TACKLES

Considerate.

Smart—I called on Miss De Vere last night.
Deahley—What? I thought her father told you never to darken his door?
Smart—He did, so I climbed in the parlor window.

His Specialty.

"I don't believe you would work if you had the opportunity," scoffed the industrious housewife.
"Dat's where you do me an injustice, mam," sniffed Sandy Pikes, as he wiped away a tear. "For ten long years I've been trying to get an open-work job in a drug store."
"An open-work job in a drug store? What kind of a job is that?"
"Why, cutting holes in porous plasters, mum."

Real Solomon.

Gunner—Bright judge over in that police court.
Guyer—What's his latest?
Gunner—Family quarrel. Husband said the cause of the difference was the fact that his trousers were threadbare and his wife refused to mend them.
Guyer—Hm! What did the wife say?
Gunner—She didn't get the chance to say anything. The judge told her to go home and patch up the difference.

A Criticism.

Knox—I saw Nuritch looking at one of your paintings the other day.
D'Auber—Ah! I'm glad of that. He intimated to me that he might have something for me to do——
Knox—Yes, while he was looking at it he told me he had intended to let you paint his back fence, but he didn't think he would now.

Tommy's Excuse.

"Tommy," exclaimed his mother as she caught him red-handed in the pantry, "what are you doing in my jam pots?"
"Didn't you say I could play detective, ma?" whimpered Tommy.
"Yes, but what are you doing in my jam pots?"
"Making some thumb impressions, that's all, ma, honest."

A HUMAN RAIL.

There was a man in Henderson
Who had a tail and slenderson,
A human rail,
Who used a nail
To fasten his supenderson.

COOL, BUT UNCALCULATED.

Guinevere—In mercy's name, Lancelot, stop where you are!

Slow Farming.

"It says here that the Government is going to encourage snail farming," remarked the oldest inhabitant as he opened his weekly paper in the country store.
"Give me the paper, Hezekiah," hastened the farmer who had just come in with a basket of eggs.
"What do you want with it, Jason?"
"By cricky, I want to show it to my hired man and let him apply for a job on one of them snail farms."
"Shucks! An ordinary hired man wouldn't be any use on a snail farm. The blamed critters would run over him."

What Polly Wanted.

Lady (in bird store)—Pretty Polly! Does Polly want a cracker?
Polly (late of Boston)—Oh, slush! Got any cold beans?

Worse Yet.

She—Young Blank isn't the fool he looks to be.
He—No; he's more so.

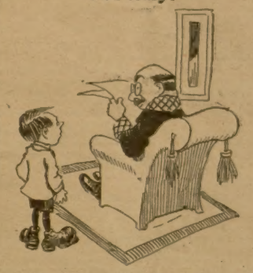
Healthy, Too.

Gunner—The idea of that professor's saying we should boycott meat by living on peanuts. It is preposterous.
Guyer—Oh, I don't know. I have heard of babies living on peanuts and thriving.
Gunner—To the woods! What kind of babies?
Guyer—Why, baby elephants.

FOOD FOR REFLECTION.

Fair Visitor—And why are you children looking on so expectantly?
Children—Because when father's finished the painting we can eat the models!

Too Easy.



Father—You mustn't fight. I didn't fight when I was of your age.
Willie—Why didn't you? That's what ma says is the matter with you now.

Cruelty to Animals.

Mrs. A.—I do love lobster, but I never have them at home, because it seems so inhuman to kill them by putting them in a kettle of boiling water.
Mrs. B.—Gracious! I never kill them that way. It would be too horrible. I always put them on in cold water and let them come to a boil.

A Bright Idea.

Husband—Have you done your best to economize this month, Mary, as I requested?
Wife—Oh, yes; I spoke to the grocer, the butcher, and the landlord, and got them to put off presenting their bills until next month.

Premature.

First Broker—Did you manage to sell all the mining stock you had?
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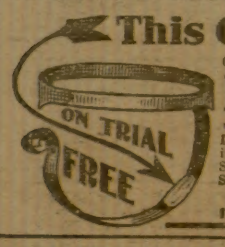

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In Strange Seas;

Or The Flying Dutchman's Daughter

By William H. Manning

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Begun in No. 6, February 5. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XIX.

FURTHER TROUBLE.

THE warning was well-founded, but my blood, briefly quickened by the sharpness of the danger, resumed its normal pace as the Cousin Polly, quicker of foot than the schooner, drew away and left the Mary of Salem beating along alone, well astern.

Really, that outburst was the final great effort of the gale. It had tried the ship severely, and Bijah and Solon had the fight of their lives at the wheel, but a partial lull came after and the snow turned again to rain, clearing our canvas a trifle.

I had no liking for the region we had run into, and I longed to bring the Polly about and head again for the warm current, but we were helpless. More than that, I was worrying as to our hull. Although Bijah assured me he had repaired the old leak thoroughly, I knew all parts of the hull were being subjected to desperate tests. If we opened a fresh seam or started a butt we might yet find a wreck upon our hands.

Two hours passed, and then matters improved. The wind fell away as if by magic, the sky cleared, and only the leaping seas told of our distress. Except for that we might have laid our course anew and headed for land, but put about we could not while the seas thundered so wildly astern.

Still worrying as to our hull, I planned to sound the well. It was not easy to be exact, but I got the graduated rod ready and waited my chance to catch the ship on a level keel. Watching her pitching I finally dropped the rod at a venture, and was so successful that I believed I had something near her proper reading. The rod came up dripping at six inches, and, as the pumps sucked at four, it was clear we had made only two inches additional since heaving up our anchor. Some of this depth, too, might have found its way from the swimming decks.

There was no immediate fear of foundering.

Next came a period of calm when we lost steerageway, and this lasted for an hour, but presently the breeze sprang up in another quarter. The wind had hauled into the west, a point favorable for a run back to land, but it did not please us. Under certain conditions an ugly cross-sea would be abroad which would test the Polly more harshly than before.

Fortunately, good luck was with us. All day the change went forward slowly, the new breeze seeming to shape its way to the swell, and blowing in flaws that amounted to but little, but by nightfall the change was fully on, and we lost all fear. Once more we spread additional sails, and when we laid our course for land we met with no especially severe seas.

Long before that the heavens had cleared completely, but we swept the seaboard in vain for sight of the Mary of Salem. If she was still afloat she had been carried out of our range, and, in the idleness, I often speculated on the mystery of that craft. Somebody had clothed her yards and afterward handled her well. Granted that Tony Mossett was aboard, whom had he found to help him? Landsmen could not have done it, for seamanship was required in a gale.

That evening, as we worked our way back, Jerry Whitebone told me his story as we stood together in the waist.

"You must know, first of all, sir," he said, "that when in childhood every one of Vanderdecken's people is required to take what is called their cradle oath. Like others, I swore, then, that if fate ever took me away from our place of exile I would bring aid to fetch away the others.

"Well, sir, I have already told you how, seven years ago, when I was fishing from a raft, I was carried north by a high wind and finally picked up by a ship that had doubled Cape Horn, and by that ship taken to Havana. I told of my people being here, but nobody believed me. Later, I told the same story in New York, in London and in Havre, but I was set down as deranged and I could get nobody to furnish a vessel, nor even believe me.

"Determined to be true to my cradle oath I planned to become a sailor myself, rise to the command of a vessel and then come here to save Vanderdecken and his companions. I was seven years in doing it, and even then things did not happen as I had planned.

"You remember that I was with you in the ship Saucy Jane, four years ago, and how your black hair and blue eyes affected me. Even then I looked upon you as the rescuer of my people, for I remembered the prophecy of Vanderdecken the Great. After the Saucy Jane was sold by her captain I tried, as you will remember, to get you to sail with me in a Brazilian coaster, as it would bring us nearer Cape Horn, but you declined.

"After that I followed the sea, worked my way up, saved some money and finally had a venture in the ship Bright Day. You know how she was wrecked and I was picked up by your vessel, a strange chance which brought me into the Cousin Polly, and near you again.

"Now, as soon as it was so I planned to fetch this ship to the land of exile. I admit that I drugged the brandy, and, after you, Bijah, and Solon were unconscious, I brought the Polly about and drove her due south. When I saw you must soon awaken, I lashed the wheel and myself pretended to be drugged, like the rest of you. That is all, sir, for you know how we finally made land."

"So you drugged us! That was a lawless trick!" I exclaimed.

"It was the only way, sir," said Jerry, with humility.

A sharp answer trembled on my lips, but just then Gretchen emerged from the companionway and I kept silent. It occurred to me that but for the trick I should never have seen the Flying Dutchman's daughter, and, somehow, I felt consoled.

Matters were well with us that evening, for, though the sea was uncomfortably choppy, we had no serious trouble in any way. Both Gretchen and her father spent much of their time on deck, and Vanderdecken took great interest in the ship. I kept them company, for, having secured sleep during the day, I was in good trim now.

I had a long talk with Vanderdecken, and found that his resolution had been strengthened. Angry with Opzoomer and Ingenhousz, he was determined to assert his authority. Being hereditary ruler of the exile land, he was ready to ignore the old-time prophecy and claim the right to govern.

As we had the ship I believed this would be easy, though I had some forebodings when I remembered the mystery of the schooner Mary, of Salem. She might yet figure largely in events.

As I stood with the Flying Dutchman I was again impressed by the strangeness of it all. The forecastle legend, the tale that usually put the accursed vessel off the Cape of Good Hope, instead of off Cape Horn, the drawing of myself into the case through the events of several years—all was strange.

I questioned my companion closely, thinking it possible that there might have been more in the life of Vanderdecken the Great than was yet told me, but nothing came of it. How the tale of an accursed captain and ship had started I could see from what I already knew, and it was plain that idle jest and superstition had kept the yarn alive. As samples of this I recalled the meeting with another ship in the gale that beset the Cousin Polly when Captain Roper was in command, and the hail from her deck and the claim that she was the Flying Dutchman, as I have already told in these pages.

The last shred of the Flying Dutchman myth faded away. It was but a story of shipwreck and long exile, when the truth was known.

All this time Hendrik, as well as the two Averys and Boissard had been useful in various tasks, and though, with the gale stilled, there was but little to do except to manage the wheel, a task only a regular sailor could attend to, they formed a non-expert part of our watches. I would not throw all the labor upon my old-time mates, so I took my trick at the wheel between ten and twelve. After that I retired, leaving Bijah in charge of the deck.

Morning found us speeding bravely along our way, a fine breeze on the larboard quarter and the Polly behaving as handsomely as if she had met with no gales or other troubles, and at six bells in the forenoon watch Vanderdecken's land was again sighted.

It was our plan to come to at a safe distance from the headland, and, not venturing to let go our anchor, get into communication with those on shore. Long before we had fetched to the desired point we made out human figures on the promontory, and it was plain that we had created more or less commotion. Appearing to give them no attention we held our course until half a mile off the land, and then shortened sail until we lost way and fell to drifting idly.

Our plans had been laid as carefully as possible, and no time was lost in lowering the larboard quarter boat. Thomas Avery and Jules Boissard entered her to manage the oars, while Hendrik and I went as passengers. It was our plan to see Mynheer Opzoomer at once, and speak to him with clearness and emphasis. Believing that the advantage was wholly with us, we intended to be firm and business-like, while avoiding all bluster and seeking to avoid offense.

We expected a harsh reception, and what really happened surprised us.

We headed for the bight of the bay, and as we passed between the twin points I saw Opzoomer and Ingenhousz appear at the landing place. Both were scrupulously dressed, and they made a rather aristocratic pair as they stood half-leaning upon their canes, but I did not feel my heart warm to them.

When within a few fathoms' distance Hendrik called to them:

"Mynheers, we greet you!" he said in a friendly way.

Opzoomer removed his hat deliberately.

"We are glad to see the younger Vanderdecken," he returned.

"The storm drove us away," Hendrik added.

"Did it drive Lawgiver Vanderdecken to sea?" asked the patroon dryly.

"He was visiting the ship."

"I do not see him now."

"Thanks to Providence, he is well and hearty. He has sent us to you to ask if you are about ready to leave."

By this time we were almost at the landing place, and the boat was allowed to drift. The patroons seemed to be alone, but thickets were near and I did not intend to put ourselves in the power of our opponents. I noticed that both men were sour of face and I expected sharp words, but Opzoomer's voice still came pacifically.

"We need not waste words here," he responded. "It is clear that you have out-

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Some men who expect a mansion in the sky will have no kick coming if they are even permitted to occupy an attic room.

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which have stood the test of time deserve a place in the medicine chest of every family. Mothers are to-day administering to their children the remedies their grandmothers used.

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witted us by your device. Your father is gone, and in the ship. Our views have not changed, but we must accept our lot. We will struggle against it no longer. We yield!"

"Mynheer," I said quickly, "I beg that you will consider us your friends and well-wishers. If I have recovered my ship by a bold stroke I have only taken what is my own. Yonder lies the Cousin Polly, and we are ready, sir, to take every person here aboard and bear you away from our land of exile."

He bowed ceremoniously.

"Having no choice, we accept your offer. We yield! Our preparations are well forwarded, and we will soon complete what little we yet have to do. As you say, all shall go. We yield!"

His voice had grown meek, but suspicion was aroused within me. The tone was not like his usual manner, and the reiteration of the final words seemed to be an excess of humility. It came to me then that the hostility of the man was not quenched, and that he intended further mischief.

"Come ashore," added Ingenhousz, "and we will show you how far our preparations have gone."

"It is not necessary," I said quickly. "We are about to return to the ship, and you can bring your people and goods off as soon as you wish."

I had barely said this when Avery pulled sharply at my sleeve, at the same time pointing with his free hand. Turning, I saw a boat between ourselves and the Cousin Polly. Hemmed in, we were in a trap.

CHAPTER XX.
WE ARE FIRED UPON.

"Treachery!" exclaimed Avery.

I looked hard at the boat and recognized men I had before seen in the village. It was plain that they had been lying hidden at the foot of the headland, and had hastened to cut off our retreat as soon as we were in the bay. A laugh sounded behind me and Opzoomer's voice came after it, mockingly pitched.

"Captain," he said, "you will notice that matters are not all in your favor. You may as well surrender, for we can crush you if we will. I think that when the ship sails north you will stay here, and alone!"

I gave him no answer. It would have been an easy thing to parley with him, and possibly I could have carried my point after long expenditure of breath, but that way did not suit me. His trick set me into hot anger, and I determined to show my teeth.

I flung up my hands, a pistol in each set of fingers.

"Opzoomer," I cried, "you see what I have here. You have seen me shoot when in the village. You know that death follows when I fire. Now, look you, patroon, this has gone far enough. I will not be captured by you, and I'll act the man of peace no longer. I'll have a free seaboard or shoot to kill!"

With this I wheeled upon the two great men and covered them, and it may be added that my weapons did not waver as I leveled them.

"Men," I pursued, "order that boat away or you die!"

My move was wholly unexpected. Clubs in the hands of the fellows in the other boat told that they anticipated resistance on my part, but as I afterward knew, it had never entered their minds that I would make the patroons my targets. They fell back precipitately.

"Stop!" I thundered. "Don't dare to run! If you try it I will fire. Stand where you are!"

A lull followed. They had not a single firearm to oppose to me, and their recent knowledge of the terrible power of powder and shot now put them in a panic. Their trepidation was easily seen, and Mynheer Opzoomer, in particular, had lost all his high color. Pale and frightened, he stared at the pistols and said nothing.

"Order your boat back!" I repeated sharply.

"What will you do then?" asked Ingenhousz huskily.

"Return to my ship without more delay."

"But you—you—you will not desert us?" he stammered.

"Not if you act the manly, decent part. Let it be understood, however, that there will be no more knavery ashore. Your friend Opzoomer must haul down his flag to stay. You have more men than we, but the weapons are with us. Will you doom your women and children?"

"I have felt," added Ingenhousz, with an appearance of candor, "that this should be settled amicably. As you say, the power is with you. For one, I advise that all contention be dropped."

I turned to Opzoomer.

"You hear, sir," I pursued. "Now, then, what is your decision?"

He looked at me for a moment, and then his head slowly inclined forward. The fire of hostility was gone from his face and manner, and he seemed like one crushed by adversity.

"I have tried to do my duty, and no more," he said brokenly. "All has been according to the prophecy of Vanderdecken the Great—and I am the archivist. Providence has willed that I fall. I'll resist no more. The boat shall go away."

The craft that would have trapped us had been resting on its oars. Now the patroon gave an order, and its crew pulled slowly back to the place from which they had come.

"That," continued Opzoomer, "is my last order as an officer of this land. Here and now I resign. Mynheer Ingenhousz, you and Vanderdecken are the only remaining rulers. Arrange things as you will. As for me, I submit, but will act no forward part."

At the last word he turned and walked away, his head low and his steps uncertain. Clearly, the man was crushed. From him I turned to Ingenhousz and detected an eager light in that man's eyes.

"Mynheer," I asked, "will you go to my ship and confer with Vanderdecken and the others?"

"Gladly!" he replied, and with quickness of speech. "I have sided with my colleague, as he is the archivist, but—the power is with you! I shall be glad to see Mynheer Vanderdecken and arrange things quickly for departure."

He came to the water's edge and we took him into the boat. After that we put off for the Cousin Polly. He was mild of manner, though not unduly humble, and I felt that the struggle was past. On the way I talked with him amicably as possible, and nothing occurred to cause fresh resentment. For one, I could afford to be lenient.

Reaching the ship, I took my guest to the cabin, and there we talked with Vanderdecken. Nothing was said about old or recent difficulties, every word being shaped to the paramount issue, namely, the departure from South Amsterdam. Ingenhousz stated that preparations were so advanced ashore that their few valuable goods could be stowed before nightfall, and all of their party be in the ship, ready for departure, by the going of day. Accordingly, it was agreed that boats should begin to ply at once, and that he should go ashore to superintend matters there.

We presently accompanied him to the deck.

"Mynheer," I then said, "what do you know about another large vessel, a schooner that has been in these waters?"

"Another vessel!" he repeated in surprise. "I know of none. I have seen none, and none has been reported to me."

"Are all of your people in the village?"

"Yes. That is, all but Tony Mossett and his fellow pirates. We know nothing about them—or, rather, I know nothing. Perhaps Mynheer Opzoomer does."

I did not press the point, but it left me freshly perplexed. Who were the men who had manned the Mary of Salem, handling her with skill even in the gale?

I dropped the subject, and Ingenhousz went down the gangway ladder, entered the boat and was rowed toward the bay. While I was watching, a hand was laid upon my arm. I returned quickly and saw Gretchen.

"Captain," she said, "will you look at the volcano? Never in my day has it been so bright before. Can it be that its activity is renewed, and that this exile land is to have a fresh era of productivity here?"

I looked as she directed. Truly, a great change had come upon the far-away volcano. Its light was no longer a mere blotch of whitish yellow on the horizon, but a tall beacon of red was mounting into the heavens, flashing upward with intensity and flaming beauty. It seemed as if the fiery chasm was venting its anger upon the earth beyond its walls. No doubt destroying lava was being belched forth, but only the sea was there to feel the hot touch.

"Even if is is so," I replied, "I think nobody cares to linger."

"True, true," she responded, "but I am wondering if, should our fields again be fertile and given over to warmth, another party of castaways will ever come here to enjoy the strange land."

"I think they will not come willingly."

"It is so, yet, as we prepare to go, I feel heavy at heart. When we sail we shall leave the only home I have known. I am glad to go, yet—yet, this has been home!"

I talked to her for some time, but we were not long kept waiting for manifestations ashore. Pikarros were being loaded with the few household goods that were to be taken, and the bustle indicated that Opzoomer carried the only reluctant mind among his people.

With the hope of departure before us, I took heed again to the fact that, since Captain Roper ordered the Polly abandoned, I had been unable to find any of the ship's instruments except the compass in the binnacle. I should want to take frequent observations, and sextant and quadrant were needed. Once more I searched, and finally I located them in the steward's pantry, where they had probably been placed and forgotten. Having them, I took the sun at noon.

Goods and people were coming on board, but I remembered Tony Mossett and his misguided comrades. Seeing Opzoomer, I let him know that I was aware of his past connection with Tony, and he finally went to pirates' cave. He found the place deserted.

Also, to make sure our eyes had not deceived us when we thought we saw the Mary of Salem afloat, I sent Jerry to the cove where we had previously made the schooner fast. As we expected, the cove was empty, and Jerry found nothing to explain the mystery of her going, nor who composed her present crew.

Meanwhile, the work of loading had been going on steadily. First the goods were conveyed to the Polly and duly stored, and then the people came off. It was nearly twilight when all was done, and, at Vanderdecken's request, a small party went ashore to take a final look at the village. When they returned both lawgiver and Gretchen bore signs of weeping. Why not? Glad as they were to go it was not easy to desert forever the land of their birth—the land where Vanderdecken the Great had established himself, over a century before, a shipwrecked mariner.

With everything done we hove up the anchor and set our sails, and we were just getting the first signs of steerageway when Bijah called out words that thrilled me then.

"Sail, ho!"

I was too much amazed to give the customary answer, but, sweeping my gaze to windward, I saw a jaunty schooner under full sail, flying our way.

"The Mary of Salem!" exclaimed Jerry Whitebone.

"Look sharp there, captain!" added Bijah. "Her decks are crowded, and it looks to me as if she carries a big gun——"

He stopped short. There was a puff of smoke at the schooner's bows, and a cannon ball came sailing our way. The Mary was fast overhauling us, and we were under fire.

CHAPTER XXI.
THE RAIN OF FIRE.

The situation was alarming, and the more so because, though the Cousin Polly was now fully under steerageway, she had not gained her full speed and the schooner was coming up to us hand over fist. Previously, none of our party had suspected a cannon was aboard of her, our stay in her having been brief and at night, but the big gun was there, and a well-directed shot would cripple us. Worse yet, she had only to continue firing and that calamity would be certain.

The opening gun was harmless, the ball skimming the swell fifty fathoms distant, but I sent the women and children below and then took up my burden. How was the Polly to be saved?

We had directed our bows to the north, but it would never do to hold that course. If we were saved we must sail due east, trusting to our heels to outfoot the enemy.

(Continued on page fifteen.)

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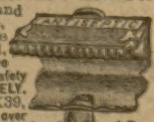
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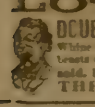

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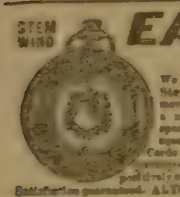

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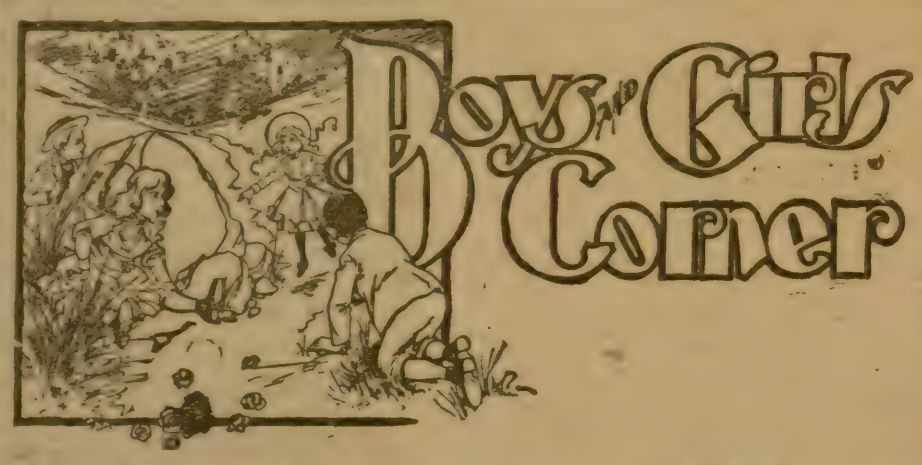

A Battle for a Mine;

Or, Fighting Desperate Foes

By Will Lisenbee

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CHAPTER XIV.

IN THE DARKNESS.

WHEN Mark Huber left camp and started down the canyon in search of the missing Fenton, a vague sense of impending danger assailed him and made him move with great caution.

He was now fully convinced that something had happened to Fenton—something to cause his long delay in returning. A suspicion that Ray and Templeton were at the bottom of it came to him, and he realized the necessity of being on the alert.

As he made his way through the chaparral he kept his eyes open lest he should be taken unawares by some unseen foe. But the narrow valley was as silent as the grave.

On reaching the spot where the burros had been picketed he halted and looked about him. Darkness was fast settling, but in the uncertain light he was able to see that the burros were gone! This, then, might explain the prolonged absence of Fenton. Still he reflected that it was but a short time before that he had heard the braying of one of the little animals.

He stood in the midst of a little open glade, listening intently. Moved by a sudden impulse—as if in defiance of any foe that might be lurking near—he lifted his voice and called loudly for Fenton. The sound echoed and re-echoed through the canyon, but in the silence that followed there was no response.

This convinced him that Fenton had been rendered incapable of answering the call, or was beyond the range of his voice. The burros might have became frightened, pulled their pickets and fled down the canyon; and in that case it would have been natural for Fenton to have followed them.

These thoughts came to Mark, and he moved down the canyon at a brisk pace.

He had taken but a dozen steps, and was in the act of passing a small clump of small live-oaks, when something whizzed through the air near his head. The next moment a lariat settled about his shoulders, and in a breath, jerked by an unseen hand, it tightened about his shoulders and arms and he was pulled violently to the earth.

Before he had time to utter a cry, a dark form sprang from the cover of the bushes and leaped upon him. In the waning light he caught a glimpse of a feather-decked head and the outline of a dark face, and then he received a heavy blow that rendered him unconscious.

When his senses returned he was lying on his back, his hands and feet securely bound. All was the blackest darkness about him. He tried to penetrate the darkness, but not the slightest point of light was visible.

His mind was confused, and for some time he could not remember what had happened. He lay still trying to remember. Bit by bit it all came back to him. Some one had thrown a lasso over his shoulders, jerking him to the earth, and he could remember nothing more.

Where was he? It was impossible to answer the question. From the intense darkness about him he was led to believe that he was in a building of some sort, or in a cavern. He raised himself to a sitting posture. His hands, which were tied behind him, pained him as he tugged at the cord.

He put out his hands, and as he did so they came in contact with the bare rocks, such as might from the floor of a cavern. His arms were held so close to his body by the cords that he could only move his hands with difficulty. Close behind him he discovered a rocky wall, and against this he leaned, trying to collect his scattered senses.

That he was in a cavern he no longer doubted. But who were his captors? He had a rather vague remembrance of having seen the dark face and plumed head of an Indian just as the lariat was drawn about him, and this convinced him that it was the work of Mountain Joe.

As these thoughts were passing through his mind, his hands, which were against the wall, came in contact with a sharp projection. He was about to move aside to avoid it when a sudden thought came to him. The projection might be used to sever his bonds! The thought thrilled him to sudden resolution.

Moving his hands carefully along the face of the wall, he finally succeeded in bringing the cord that bound them in contact with the sharp rock, and began patiently to move the cords back and forth across the projection.

With each movement he could feel the fiber in the cord parting as the saw-like rock passed over it, and he kept persistently at work. Within five minutes he felt the cords part and drop from his wrists, and his hands were free.

Elated at his success, he began to unfasten the cords that bound his lower limbs. But this was not so easily accomplished as he had anticipated. The cords were tightly drawn and tied in many knots. He worked hurriedly and persistently, however, and soon found himself free.

He felt greatly relieved, and he at once rose to his feet and began to shake himself to take the cramp from his limbs.

He was undecided as to what was best to do. If he attempted to find his way out of the cavern he might go deeper into it. Where was Fenton? He had little doubt that the prospector had, like himself, fallen into the hands of Mountain Joe's Apaches, for he was fully convinced that Mountain Joe and the Indians were at the bottom of the whole affair.

If he only had a light, he reflected, and could get a view of his surroundings, he might be able to decide on what course to take. He felt in his pocket where he always carried a box of matches, and to his delight he found the box had not been removed by his captors.

Quickly he drew forth the box, extracted a match and lighted it. As the tiny flame burned, he held it aloft and gazed quickly about him.

He was, indeed, in a cavern. The chamber was large, with a vaulted roof rising a dozen feet above the floor. It was fully twenty feet in width, and extended further than the eye could penetrate.

As Mark let his eyes wander about him he saw signs of habitation. At one side of the chamber were scattered sundry cooking utensils, and near the spot a pile of ashes, showing that a fire had been kindled there.

To the left were a pile of blankets, canvas bags, such as are used to carry articles on pack burros, and other articles that might belong to a party of prospectors.

Mark advanced and examined the bags, and found them filled with provisions, prospector's tools and the like. The cavern floor at this point was covered with a layer of sand and crumbled spar, and in this, shoe tracks were plainly visible.

In one of the bags he found a tin miner's lamp, and as it was partly filled with oil, he lighted it. He now began a more extensive exploration of his surroundings.

He noticed that the tracks in the sand all led in a certain direction, and he followed the trail, hoping thereby to find his way to the outside.

As he proceeded, the cavern narrowed, and he noticed many passageways leading at right angles with the one he was following. He had traveled some fifty yards when he was startled by the sound of voices coming from the passage ahead.

In a moment he had extinguished his light, and crept into one of the side passages, where he crouched silent and breathless.

The sound of the voices drew nearer and nearer. Some one was approaching. A gleam of light came from far down the passage, and Mark drew hastily back and waited.

CHAPTER XV.

MISSING!

It will be remembered that Frank Stetson, upon starting down the valley in search of Fenton and Mark, had paused in a dense clump of chaparral, having heard something moving toward him through the tangled bushes.

He stood breathless and silent, waiting for what ever it was to approach. It seemed to approach for a time, and then to recede. Presently the sounds grew fainter and fainter, then ceased.

Frank was mystified. It might have been some wild animal prowling through the chaparral, he thought. He moved forward with the determination to investigate.

He moved cautiously in the direction taken by the nocturnal prowler, picking his way carefully through the interlacing foliage, and keeping his eyes open for any foe, animal or human, that might be lurking in ambush.

After traveling for two hundred yards he came abruptly to the base of a cliff and stopped bewildered. Which way to turn he could not decide. He stood listening, but all was silent.

The mystery of the disappearance of Fenton and Mark oppressed him. Something was wrong. The crafty Apaches who had been in company with Mountain Joe might be lying in ambush in the valley, in the service of Ray and Templeton. He could not believe that Mark's rascally kinsman and his vicious companion had given up the fight.

"I shall go a little further down the valley," he thought, "and see what I can discover."

He traveled for a quarter of a mile, but no living thing was visible.

With increasing alarm he discovered that

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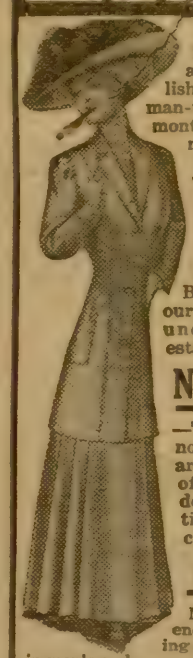

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the burros that had been picketed in an open glade in the valley were gone! He stopped, stunned and bewildered. He was now more than ever convinced that his conjectures respecting the Apaches were correct. They were probably lurking near, and ready to fall upon him on sight.

He felt that it was useless to prolong his search in the valley. He would return to camp at once. He had a vague hope that when he should return he would find his missing companions awaiting him.

Realizing that a foe might be lurking near, however, he used the same caution on his return that he had practiced in his search through the valley.

The fire had completely burned out when he reached camp, and he groped his way to the spot, his heart heavy with the discovery that neither of his friends had returned during his absence.

He stood listening in silence for some moments, fearing lest the foe might be near, but there was no sign of life about the place.

Gathering some dry fagots, he threw them in a heap where the fire had been and lighted them. The flame leaped up, shedding a bright glow about him.

Glancing quickly about, he started in utter amazement. The bags containing the ore were gone! That was not all. Some of the bags in which the provisions were carried had also disappeared.

Frank's heart sank within him. Who had done this? He was too bewildered to think of any logical answer to the question. Some devil's own jugglery was at work in the valley. It seemed like a miracle that he himself had escaped it.

He examined the earth about the camp, but there were so many tracks about it—those made by his friends and himself that it was useless to try to distinguish them from those made by the unknown visitors in the uncertain light of the fire.

The situation was grave—alarming. He was alone, in a strange country, surrounded by dangers of which he could only guess. But he did not allow himself to be cast down. He realized that the situation called for action—resolute action, and at once.

As he glanced up he saw that the moon was rising above the grim blackened cliffs on the eastern border of the canyon and casting a silvery radiance over the desolate scene.

As Frank stood glancing about him, he saw a number of tracks leading toward the cliff that rose west of the camp. He took a blazing stick from the fire and followed the trail. It led to the base of the cliff and turned into a gap in the rocky wall. He followed it, ascending the steep incline, and in a few moments had reached the summit.

Here he again found the trail, and with it mule tracks! The burros had been brought hither, loaded with the plunder taken from the camp and driven away.

Frank was quick to arrive at this conclusion. He realized the necessity of immediate action. He must follow the trail. He mounted to the very summit of the cliff, and as he glanced about him, he saw that the rising moon was flooding the valley to the west with a light that rendered objects at a great distance visible.

Quickly he threw his glance along the valley. Far away, a dark line of objects were moving slowly to the southwest. It required no second glance to convince him of the truth. It was the stolen burros, and they were being driven away loaded with the plunder obtained by the robbers!

Frank made up his mind to go in pursuit, and yet he hesitated as he thought of his missing friends. Should he remain and try to solve the mystery of their fate?

CHAPTER XVI.

IN THE RAVINE.

As Mark Huber crouched in the darkness of the passage and saw the gleam of light and heard the voices of those approaching, he peered cautiously from behind the angle in the rocky wall. As he did so, he saw two dark forms approaching, the foremost carrying a torch, which shed a fitful ray about the gloomy passage.

They were clad in the garb of Indians, and their faces were stained darkly and streaked with ocher. At the first glance Mark believed them to be Indians, but even before their voices betrayed them, he perceived that they were whites in disguise.

They were strangers to Mark, but known to the reader, for they were none other than Wykoff and Jessup, who had formed the villainous compact with Ray and Templeton.

They were walking in great haste, and as they passed, Mark listened eagerly to every word they uttered.

"We must be off at once," Wykoff was saying, "for we want to be on the river long before daylight."

"What the thunder are we to do with the chap we have got cooped up here?" asked Jessup.

"Leave him for the wolves to eat," replied Wykoff, with brutal abruptness.

As they passed on, Mark followed at a distance, being careful to keep out of sight.

As they came into the large chamber they stopped short, uttering exclamations of amazement.

"The boy is gone!" cried Wykoff.

"It looks that way," replied Jessup. "By thunder! how could he have gotten away with those hobbles on?"

"That's it. What shall we do about it?

"I don't know. We can't stop to look for him."

"Sure we can't. Anyway he may have wandered off in the cavern and got lost. It won't make any difference to us. We must get out of this at once."

Each of the men seized one of the large bags and hurried back in the direction from which they had entered.

Mark slipped into a side passage to let them pass, and then followed cautiously.

A short distance further on they came to a steep descent, and at the foot of this a couple of burros stood. The bags were placed on their backs, and the two men then hastily returned and brought other articles from the chamber. After these were strapped to the backs of the burros, the little animals were hurriedly driven away.

Mark followed, keeping at a safe distance behind, but listening intently to every word uttered by the two men.

They soon reached the outside, and with a thrill of pleasure Mark saw the silvery beams of the rising moon filtering through the foliage of the trees that clustered about the entrance of the cavern.

Here the burros were hurried up a steep defile, Mark following swiftly and noiselessly.

"I don't suppose we shall be troubled with the duck we threw into the ravine," said Wykoff, stopping for a moment to gaze into a deep depression. "I guess he is done for."

"I should think so," replied Jessup. "In any case we shan't stop to see. We have made way with two, and the other has taken to the woods to hide, I guess. By George! we are in luck. If Ray and Templeton have got the ore loaded on the burros we shall be off in a jiffy. I say, Wykoff, you would make a good general."

"Especially one who is retired on full pay," laughed Wykoff. "But let's be moving. The fellow down there is quiet enough. His neck must have been broken when he fell."

The two moved on up the slope, urging the burros ahead.

Mark stopped, his senses in a whirl. It was plain to him now that the rascally conspirators had captured and thrown Dick Fenton into the ravine. Perhaps his lifeless body lay there now, left by the murderers as a prey for the prowling wolves.

"I shall find out," thought Mark, as he turned about and began to pick his way carefully down the steep wall into the ravine, his heart sinking with dread as he thought of what he might find there—the mangled remains of his friend in the black depths of the ravine.

CHAPTER XVII.

ON THE SHORE.

Mark had barely commenced the descent when the sound of steps coming up the narrow defile caused him to stop abruptly. He turned quickly to see the dark form of a man moving slowly up the slope.

Keeping himself concealed in the shadows, Mark waited breathlessly for the figure to approach.

At that moment the broad rays of the rising moon fell full on the figure, causing a half-stifled cry of delight to escape the lips of Mark.

"It's Dick Fenton, as I live!" he cried, and leaping up the steep wall, ran to meet his friend.

"Mark!" cried Fenton, staring at the youth in astonishment. "I was sure they had captured you and Frank."

"They got me, but I got away," replied Mark, as he took his friend's hand joyfully. "How did you happen to escape? I overheard them saying they had thrown you to the bottom of the ravine. I was terribly frightened about you."

"I had a close call," said Fenton. "I might have been killed, but I struck on some stunted pines clinging in a crevice of the rocks, and that checked my fall. So here I am, all right except that one of my ankles is sprained and I can't get on except at a snail's pace. Where is Frank?"

"I left him at camp while I went to look for you. That is all I can tell you," and Mark gave a brief and hurried account of his adventures; his capture, imprisonment in the cavern, his escape and what followed. "It is the work of Ray and Templeton," he added. "I found out that much, though the fellows ahead are strangers to me. I suppose they must have fallen in with Ray and Templeton and planned to work together. And now, what shall we do? Go back to camp?"

"I suppose so. We must find out how Frank has fared. He may have fallen into the hands of the enemy. In that case they may have made away with the ore and our outfit."

"That is so. We ought to get back to camp as soon as we can."

Fenton made but slow progress, though he was assisted by Mark, and it was fully a quarter of an hour before they reached camp. They found it deserted and plundered.

"This is pretty tough," said Fenton, dejectedly. "They have outwitted us at last."

"Not yet!" came a well-known voice, and the next instant Frank Stetson came running down the slope. "We shall do things to them yet if we hurry. Where in the name of goodness have you fellows been?" he asked. "I have been fearfully alarmed and supposed something terrible had happened to you both."

"Well, we have been mussed up a little," confessed Mark, "but as good luck would have it we came out in pretty good order," and Frank was briefly told of what had befallen the two in their absence from camp.

"I see we have all been in for a little adventure," said Frank, "but I have been the most fortunate in not having been bowled over and made a prisoner. I have escaped by keeping my eyes and ears open and keeping in the dark. Those fellows have taken our burros, plundered the camp and are off. We must follow them."

Fenton sank down on a boulder.

"Boys," he said, "it is all I can do to hob-

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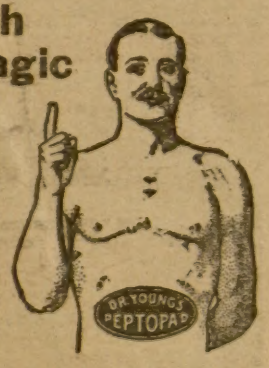

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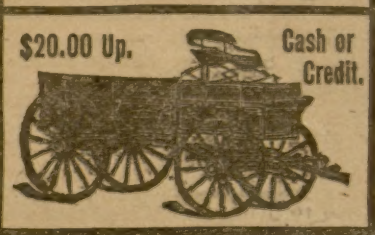

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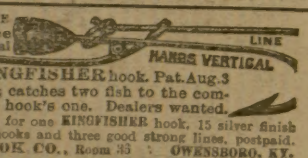

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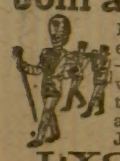

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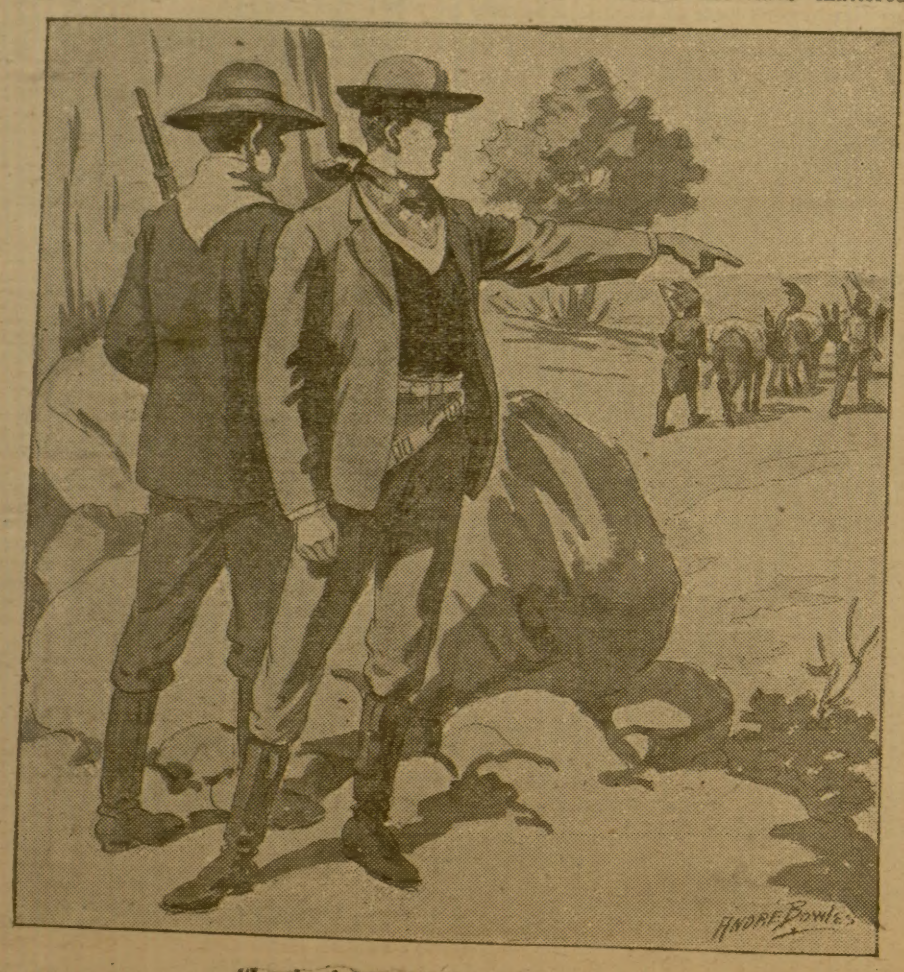
ble along at a tortoise pace. What the Sam Hill are we to do?"

"I think Mark and I had better go on and leave you to follow on our trail," suggested Frank. "Those fellows are not a mile away. I saw them a few moments ago, crossing the valley to the west, and we shall have no trouble in keeping track of them. What do you say?"

"I don't see any other way out of the difficulty," confessed Fenton. "I hate to have you boys go alone, but it can't be helped. I'll follow as fast as I can, and all you need to do is to locate their hiding place."

"Then we had better be off," said Mark. "But I haven't even got a pocketknife. How are you fixed, Frank?"

"I have my rifle and a pistol. These will be enough, I fancy. You can take the pistol, and we'll be off." He turned to Fenton. "If you don't show up at the proper time,"



"Look, they are going for the river."

he said, "we'll double on our trail and give you a lift. Good-by, and good luck."

"The same to you," responded Fenton. "Don't worry about me. I'll be on hand in due time."

The boys ran lightly up the slope, and on reaching the summit, they could still see the little train of burros and men far down the valley.

They hurried along the trail, being careful to keep in the shadows of rocks and bushes so as to give no warning to the robbers that they were pursued.

But men and burros were soon lost to sight, and the boys were compelled to go more slowly as they found great difficulty in following the trail by moonlight.

But they pushed on as rapidly as possible, and within an hour, again came in sight of the train.

"We must not allow them to get out of our sight if we can help it," said Mark. "They will hardly suspect that they are being followed, and this will give us a big advantage."

For hours they kept steadily on. Once, when the fugitives had stopped for a little rest and to slake their thirst at a small stream, Frank and Mark came almost upon the train before they knew it, and narrowly escaped discovery.

"It was a close call," whispered Mark as the train moved on and they followed. "I was almost sure they had seen us."

"Well, it would not have mattered a whole lot," remarked Frank, indifferently. "I think we are quite a match for them if it comes to open hostilities. Even now I could wing them all with my repeating rifle before they could get ready for action, but we shall wait till such extreme measures are necessary."

They had now descended into a wide basin, almost devoid of vegetation, and the boys found it necessary to widen the distance between themselves and the train in order to avoid discovery.

A mile further on they turned westward and began to ascend a gentle slope. On arriving at the summit a wide valley lay before them, and in its midst flashed the waters of a broad, clear stream.

"Now there will be something doing," said Mark. "They can't go further than the river."

"What stream is this?" Frank asked.

"The San Pedro River, I am pretty sure."

"Can they cross it?"

"I hardly think so from its appearance."

"Then they will have to come to a halt or change their course."

"Or take to the river," suggested Mark. "They may have some sort of a craft lying in wait."

"By George! I never thought of that!" exclaimed Frank. "In that case we should be left high and dry and they could give us the horse laugh."

"Look! They are going straight for the river!"

"So they are! and it's a sure thing they cannot ford it at that point."

The boys pushed on, leaving the trail and approaching the river from a different point.

They made their way through a scant thicket of scrubby live oaks, and descending into a deep gully, they approached the river at a point some distance below the robbers.

"Now we shall see what they are up to," breathed Mark, as they crept to the margin of the river.

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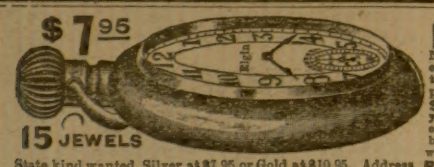

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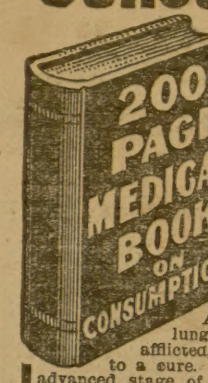

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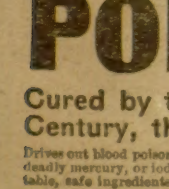

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In Strange Seas.

(Continued from page eleven.)

This would give us the breeze on our larboard quarter, as the wind was hauling into the north. Knowing that the Polly was fast we hoped for the best, and hastened to pack our yards.

A stern chase was on.

Twice more the schooner fired, but with as little success as before. By that time night had fully fallen and our escape would have been confidently looked for but that the volcano was doing its best to ruin us by turning night into day. Clearly, the mountain was in strong eruption, and the great red pillar that mounted into the heavens sent its light even to our pursuer's bows.

Vanderdecken said he had never seen one-quarter so much fury there, and all his people echoed his words. Fire was hurled high and was ever falling into the agitated waters. Now, too, a deep, roaring sound came to our ears. The volcano was in continual convulsion.

All this would have been of no more than passing interest but for the fact that we were obliged to sail directly toward the belching peak, in order to keep away from the schooner. Running as we were, the Polly was in strong light, and a good target.

Presently Jerry Whitebone came to me.

"Beg your pardon, sir," he said, "but we are getting into dangerous quarters. There is a safe way, but one has to know where it is, or go aground in the shallows, or bump into a reef, of which there are plenty."

"Has to know the way," I repeated. "Do you know it?"

"Ay, ay, sir. Many's the time I have boated here, and I know the channel well. You will see there are many rocks that lift from the water, sometimes five and sometimes ten feet. There is one channel and only one among them."

"Can you con the ship and take us safely through?"

"Ay, sir."

"Then do it. Stand by the binnacle and direct the man at the wheel."

He did as told and we began a new course which took us here and there as he planned. I had hoped that the schooner would disdain to imitate our example and try for a more direct way, but there was at least one prudent head aboard her. Where we went she followed, and both vessels kept off the reefs and shallows. There was, however, no more firing from the Mary of Salem, and that was a vast relief.

As we drew still nearer to the volcano its light became intense and the heat uncomfortable. Not only was a steady stream of fire rising aloft, but it spread out like the curve of an umbrella top and both liquid masses and huge rocks went splashing into the sea. It was possible to get too close for safety, and I consulted Jerry, but he declared there was but one way and we held on, every instant taking us closer to the zone of danger.

Already the minor bits of fire were falling around us, and occasionally our deck was pelted by a glowing stone.

I began to fear for our sails, and, with the Polly still seeking the greater heat, our total incineration, a bucket overboard and brought it up full of water, intending to lave his face to offset the effects of the fire, but the brine was almost at the boiling point. Nature rebelled against such an inferno, however, and we resorted to the scuttle-butt, drawing lightly from its precious store.

"Jerry," I cried, "we can't endure this! What's to be done?"

"Courage, sir!" he replied. "See yonder high rock. When we round that we shall turn sharply and bowl away north. Patience!"

It was good advice, but hard to follow. Most of the men were busy pitching stones overboard, and the heat was almost too much for endurance. Our sailing, too, was wild, for the sea rocked under our keel and bade fair to wreck us in that terrible place. I was gazing in awe upon the boiling mountain when a gentle voice sounded at my side.

"The volcano will bring back prosperity to our land, captain."

I wheeled in alarm. The Flying Dutchman's daughter was there, the calmest person on our decks. She looked at the blazing monster with unshaken serenity.

"For heaven's sake!" I shouted, "go below. Death rides with us here!"

"The volcano has never harmed my people, and it never will!" was her composed reply. "Our land will be restored to fertility by the change."

"But the awful heat——"

I was interrupted as Jerry shouted an order, and Bijah put the wheel hard over, whereupon our bows swung about and the volcano came upon our beam. Then I wished we had all the canvas spread that we could boast of, but it was no time for sending men aloft. We were doing well, however, and the Polly flew on her new course with the sails as hard as iron.

Once more I besought Gretchen to go to the cabin, but she serenely asked leave to remain, and she stayed.

A full mile we ran in fine style, and then something like a mighty groan came from the mountain, and a vast wave of fire was flung out with a tremendous boom. Except for minute particles we got none of it, but the schooner, still pursuing, was caught in the maw of the avalanche, and rocks and lava fairly rained upon her decks. We were not surprised, a little later, to see flames below and aloft, but her men were working bravely, and we believed they would extinguish the fire.

Unknown to us, so thick was the smoke, a mist had been creeping up along the sea. It thickened swiftly, until, combined with the smoke, it shut out all view and we were in a yellow pall which might have overturned our courage but for the fact that we were footing it away from the monster of the deep.

All that night we sailed into the north, but with a head wind most troublesome to us. Then what we had long foreseen came to pass. A squall pounced upon us and we were forced to turn about and run before it. For hours we dinned along in the blanket of the storm, all view shut off and the skill of our few able seamen taxed to the utmost, but good fortune was with us and we outlived the war of the elements.

Toward night the fog thinned, and with a dying wind we felt that the worst was over. Just before nightfall we came upon a wreck wallowing in the seas, a schooner with both masts gone and her deck cumbered with torn sails and broken spars. It was the Mary of Salem, undone, deep in the water and disconsolate, but with men aboard, who worked the pumps with desperate zeal. It was a picture of distress we could not ignore, so we came to as soon as possible, anxious to give her aid. The seas ran so high that no boat could be launched, but we stood by until day, when the party came off in their own quarterboat.

All told, they counted nine, and from them we heard the story of the once-mysterious schooner.

She had sailed from Salem for the island of Juan Fernandes, but was caught in the same gale that first brought trouble to the Polly, and carried south just as the Polly had been. They had landed on Vanderdecken's territory, but, fearing they were near hostile persons, had been in hiding when Jerry and I found the schooner. After we left Tony Mossett stowed below they had released him, and he had told them we were pirates. As a result, they joined hands with Tony and his men, all sailing together. Their poor opinion of us had led them to chase the Polly, at Tony's order, as has been told.

In seeking to pass the volcano Mossett had been killed by a falling stone, and afterward, having extinguished the fire in the craft, they struggled with the latest gale, and, making sorry weather of it, were near death when we picked them up.

Of the survivors, only one, Daniel Grief, was left of Tony's original party. He was accorded forgiveness for his relatives' sake.

Two hours after the rescue it was fully clear, and with the change surprise awaited us. Southwest of where we lay Vanderdecken's land was visible, a distant blot on the horizon. Farther east was the volcano, but not as we had before seen it. The top had caved in, and its height was reduced one-half. Nor was this all. Heat was still there, but the exiles, accustomed to its appearance from childhood, were unanimous in the decision that it was a dying fire. No flames issued from its crater, and a bleakness was over all that told of destruction.

To settle this point, and to repair our rigging somewhat, we anchored and lay for twenty-four hours. Every one of these hours increased the general opinion. Although in another far-distant generation the volcano might resume its fiery pillar, it was destined to slumber for many years.

And as soon as it slumbered and was cooled off, the heat that had warmed the current from its base and made the land fertile would be withdrawn. That meant that the land would go back to polar cold, to ice and desolation. The land, like the volcano, had lived its life and was to exist no longer. Doubtless the ever-moving ice-field would press onward, now finding no heat to check its advance, and cover the village deep with its great mass.

There were wet cheeks among the exiles when, our sails set and bellying, we stood away for the north.

All went well with us. We finally made known seas, and so went on until we fetched to Monterey. Later, nearly all the people elected to take up their new homes in Holland, and Vanderdecken was among them, but he, unlike Onzoomer, asked me to get. I had reason to remember. And it was because of the reason that, two years later, I was married to Gretchen. I never had Opzoomer's good will in full, probably because he knew he had been in the wrong, but with the others of the party I was always in harmony.

As to my personal history, I followed the sea for ten years, retiring as captain, at which time Bijah was my second mate, and Solon and Jerry also with me. After that I gave up maritime life, taking charge of a business house in New York which was a branch of an establishment Hendrik had successfully started in Amsterdam.

Captain Roper and the rest of the crew of the Cousin Polly were picked up adrift in their boat, and duly carried to Rio Janeiro from which point they sailed for home. The Polly long sailed the ocean, but it was not Roper who commanded her. She was my own ship until I abandoned the sea.

The end.

The Invisible Bride.

(Continued from page seven.)

heard her pronounce a name. A young woman entered the room. Sara Thornton caught the man in the chair and for a moment shook him out of the lethargy of death.

"Look!" she cried to him, pointing at the one who had just entered the chamber. "Tell Miles Taverny the truth. Which of us is his wife?"

Slowly the hand of the doomed wretch rose from his side and covered the white-faced but beautiful creature who remained like a statue in the middle of the room.

"That one!" fell from his lips. "She is the bride of the third. Your lawful wedded wife, Miles Taverny."

* * * * * * * * * *

A year later, long after Sara Thornton had disappeared from our lives, Chrystal and I received from across the water a newspaper which contained a marked paragraph which recorded the death of Madam Wray, and Chrystal knew from the handwriting that Sara Thornton had sent the news over sea.

More than once I heard from the lips of my once unseen bride the story of her escape from the burning house, aided by Sara Thornton, an escape not necessary to relate here, and, though years have followed the exciting events of the night of the third of June, I have never had cause to regret the strange bargain made with Tracy Demayne, though his intentions were mercenary and he wore between his shoulder blades the brand of crime.

The end.

Why She Uses the Telephone.

Mr. Dubbs (with newspaper)—It tells here, my dear, how a progressive New York woman makes her social calls by telephone!

Mrs. Dubbs—Progressive! Huh! She's probably like me—not a decent thing to wear."

Off for Europe.

Caller—Doesn't it worry you to think of your daughter on the ocean?

Old Lady—Land sakes, no. She can swim.

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Harriet's Bureau.

Now, Harriet's grandmother was fond of her, and gave her a charming bureau for her birthday. It was stained green and had bright brass handles, and it looked exceedingly pretty against the pink rose wallpaper of Harriet's room. And you wouldn't think a pretty bureau like that would cause Harriet any trouble, would you? But it did, yes indeed it did, and you must be told about it, so that if your grandmother ever gives you a bureau for your birthday you won't make the mistake Harriet did.

Harriet filled the bureau drawers tidily, and put her best dress and the guimpe and ribbons that went with it in the lowest drawer. And because she was proud of the little brass key she locked the lowest drawer and put the key in her pocketbook, where she knew it would be safe.

After that she went away to visit her grandmother in the country for a day or two, to thank her for her beautiful birthday present.

Now, Harriet was invited to a party—a perfectly splendid party—on the seventh and as her Aunt Eleanor was coming down from the country on the morning of the seventh, it was arranged that Harriet should come with her. When she reached home she took a nap before luncheon, to be quite rested for the party, and after luncheon her mother brushed her hair into most beautiful curls and said:

"Now, get your party dress and we'll have you all ready in no time."

"Oh, yes," said Harriet, "I put it in the lower drawer of my bureau," and she sat down on the floor and tugged at the handles.

"Oh, I remember, I locked it," she said, jumping up. Then all at once her expression changed.

"Oh, mother!" she cried, "I put the key in my pocketbook and left the pocketbook at grandmother's."

"Oh, dear me!" cried her mother, "there's not another dress you can wear! Your blue is unripped and your white is in the wash. I'm afraid you can't go."

Harriet sank to the floor and was just going to cry when brother Joe came in.

"What's the trouble?" he asked. And when they told him he said, "Oh, that's all right; I'll soon get your dress for you."

And what do you suppose Joe did? I wonder if any of you would have thought of it? He went to the bureau and pulled out the second drawer from the bottom and put his hand into the lowest drawer and brought out Harriet's best dress. And that's how Harriet managed to get to the party after all.

Holiday Fighter.

A New Jersey dog has a most peculiar habit, which is that regularly every Sunday and holiday he fights with some of his canine friends. Ordinary days he is the most quiet and peaceable dog imaginable, and would no more think of picking a quarrel than of refusing a bone. But always on Sundays and holidays he celebrates in this peculiar way. Out he starts spoiling for a fight, tail erect and hair bristling. He never fails to find one, either!

Why he does this no one has ever been able to find out, but there seems to be something in the air on those special days that excites his fighting instincts, and he never misses an opportunity.

Solved.

Teacher—Well, have you thought of a sentence containing the word "dynamite?"

Ted—Yes'm, my sister Rose wouldn't let you kiss her, but my sister Dinah might!

Two Mexican Games.

While children play pretty much the same games the world over, here are two the Mexicans play which are not used anywhere else:

"Hanging Judas" is a popular one with the boys. They dress a big rag doll in funny clothes (much like a scarecrow) and stuff it with straw. They then put a firecracker in the toes and hang the figure on a line stretched across the narrow street. Then the fuse is lighted and "Judas" is pushed out on the line. Bang! go the firecrackers, Judas is all ablaze, and the children laugh and dance about as he burns. This game is commonly played around Easter time.

"The Flying Game" is another sport popular in Mexico, and their records show it was played before the time of Columbus.

A tree is cut, its branches removed and steps are made out of ropes. Others affixed to the corners of the frame are then wound around the pole. Four boys, dressed as eagles or hawks, climb up the steps, and each of them, taking a rope, swings off, while another boy whirls the square frame around. This unwinds the ropes and makes the boys fly round and round in larger circles until they reach the ground. While the birds are flying down one boy stands on top of the pole, waving a flag and beating a drum, until a looker-on feels much as if he had been to a circus.

A Birthday Error.

Dear Niece: In my recollection it is proper to give a great number of kisses to one who has a birthday, so I have ordered Hilagretti to send you a five-pound box of Scotch kisses and other sweets for your fifteenth birthday. Please do not think I have designs on you, and please do not eat them all at once, but accept them with the dear love and best wishes of UNCLE JACK.

Dear Nephew: It is ten years since I have seen you; you were a little shaver of five then, and now you are fifteen next week. I send you many happy returns by a brown baby bear, who will give you the slaps and hugs that I am not able to bestow. Your affectionate UNCLE JACK.

Dear Uncle Jack: Please don't say it was a mistake, but only a jolly joke of yours that instead of candy (which I detest) you sent me the dearest, cunningest, most affectionate little brown baby bear. I just love him and wouldn't part with him for a farm. Your loving and grateful niece, MAY.

P. S.—I'd rather have bear hugs than Scotch kisses, anyway.

Telegram—Uncle Jack: Candy received. Bully—all of the girls like me now. Pets ruled out of our academy, so prefer candy to bear.

Where Water Goes.

All the rain that percolates down into the earth comes to the surface again somewhere. It goes down until it meets rock, through which it cannot pass, and as more water is coming down and pressing upon it, it has to find a way of escape to the surface. In this underground trip it takes up from rocks the salts that are useful to the life of plants and animals.

Experience.

Billy—I saw a movin'-pitcher show about a feller that was asleep at the switch.

Jimmie—Say, if dad had the butt end of that switch, I'll bet the feller'd come to in a hurry.

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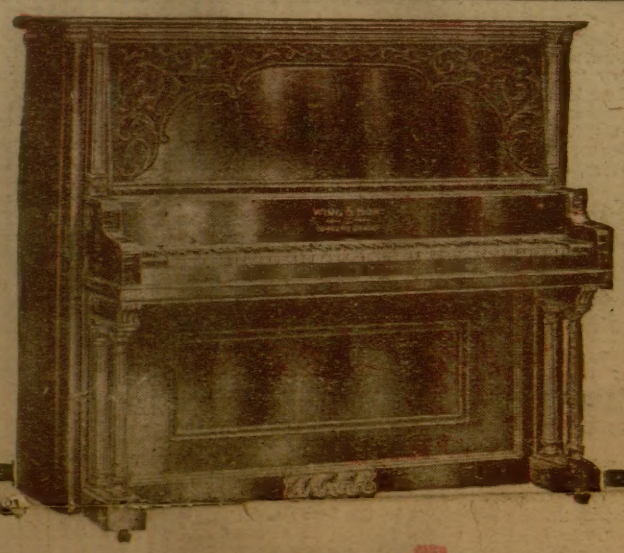

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